

THE TIMES

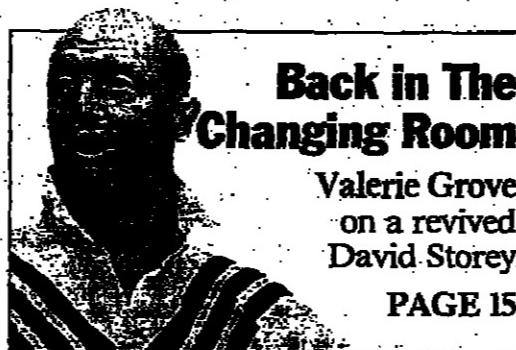
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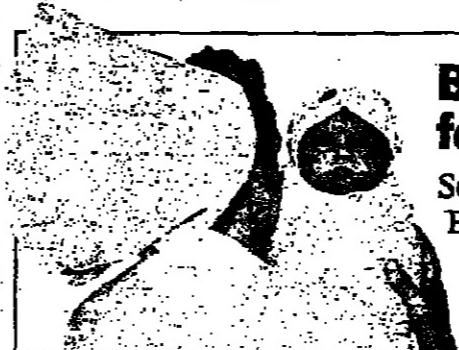


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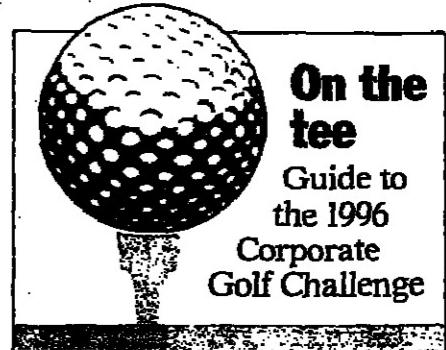


Back in The Changing Room

Valerie Grove
on a revived David Storey.
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Babies for sale
Scandal of the East-West trade in children
PAGE 14



On the tee
Guide to the 1996 Corporate Golf Challenge

Party leaders join forces as they go to the country again

BY MICHAEL HORNSEY
COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

IN A rare show of unity, the leaders of the three main political parties have written a joint letter to *The Times* to express their support for the protection of the countryside.

John Major, Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown, deliberately echo the language of a similar, though perhaps even more remarkable letter published in *The Times* on May 8, 1929, and signed by Stanley Baldwin, then Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald and Lloyd George.

Mr Major and his political foes agreed to set aside their differences at the request of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), which inspired the earlier letter. They write: "During the

next few months we shall differ on so many problems of public importance that we gladly take the opportunity of showing that on one subject we speak with a united voice — namely, in advocating the protection of our countryside in its rich personality and character."

Fiona Reynolds, director of the CPRE, said: "We asked the three leaders if they would write a letter in the same spirit as that of 1929 to mark our seventieth anniversary, which we are celebrating this year. We are delighted they agreed to do so."

The man credited with the 1929 coup is Sir Patrick Abercrombie, pioneering town and country planner who three years earlier had played a leading role in founding the CPRE along with Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, the architect of the Italian-

style fantasy of Portmeirion in North Wales. Ms Reynolds said: "It all seems to have been arranged through gentlemanly contacts behind the scenes. Baldwin, a keen country lover, is thought to have persuaded the other two leaders to sign." One of the few written references to the letter is in the minutes of an executive committee meeting held on April 24, 1929, which

notes that an appeal for funds supported by a leading article had appeared in *The Times* that morning.

Sadie Ward, the archivist, said: "The secretary of the meeting then read out a letter which it was hoped would be signed by Baldwin and the other two leaders in support of the appeal. This appeared in *The Times* on May 8. We know that Abercrombie had been trying to get such a letter published for some time."

The only other known time that the leaders of the three parties have sent a letter to the Editor was on July 6, 1981, when Margaret Thatcher, Michael Foot and David Steel appealed for funds for a memorial to Lord Mountbatten, but on that occasion they were joined by five other signatories.

The CPRE was launched at a time of

growing concern about the impact on the countryside of rapid urbanisation, fuelled by rising mobility and demand for better housing. Extensions to the Underground were making it easier for people to commute to work and the disfiguring sprawl of "ribbon development" went largely unchecked.

One of the CPRE's first successes was a campaign that forced Shell and other petroleum companies to take down unsightly roadside advertising. It also backed calls for a "green belt" (originally "girdle") round London, which was introduced in 1946.

Baldwin, who spent his boyhood in the Bewdley region of Worcestershire,

Continued on page 2, col 5

Letters, page 17

Public sector pay squeeze hits nurses

BY PHILIP WEBSTER AND NICHOLAS WOOD

THE Government angered public-sector workers yesterday by restricting nurses to a national pay rise of 2 per cent and cutting back awards to a million others, including teachers and doctors.

Britain's 480,000 nurses were told they would have to rely on local bargaining to secure more than 2 per cent, an offer dismissed by nurses' leaders as "desirous". The Government added to their anger by declining to follow last year's practice of setting a target that nurses should be able to win from hospitals.

While ministers claimed that the absence of a ceiling or local deals could mean that nurses in some areas would win much more than 2 per cent, nurses' leaders denounced the squeeze, as another attempt by the Government to foist local bargaining on them.

The dispute with the nurses and allied groups such as midwives and health visitors overshadowed the announcement of more generous rises recommended by the independent pay review bodies, for doctors, teachers, dentists, members of the armed forces, judges, senior military and top civil servants.

The Cabinet was forced to make staged awards to these groups to protect its counter-inflationary policy, to keep borrowing under control, and to check the risk of a pay explosion among other public

sector workers. The move, which saved £150 million, has allocated grants representing a million professionals in a pre-election year. Without staging, the pay bill would have risen by £254 million or 4 per cent. The average initial pay increase will now be 3 per cent, while the inflation rate is 3.2 per cent.

Teachers will receive 3.75 per cent, with 2.75 per cent in April and the rest in December. Doctors will get an average of 3.8 per cent, with dentists on 4.3 per cent. There will be special rises for junior medical staff: registrars will receive 5.3 per cent and house officers will be given 6.8 per cent. In all cases, 1 percentage point of the rise will be delayed until December.

Judges will be given staged



"See you on Monday"

Talks ahead: nurses will have to rely on local bargaining to top up their award

that some of the extra £830 million Budget allocation for schools might have to be siphoned off for teachers' pay awards is also believed to have influenced the Government's strategy. Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, ruled out raiding the £3 billion reserve to find the extra £150 million needed to pay the rises in full immediately.

Senior Treasury officials insisted that the decision would not affect the Chancellor's growth forecast for this year of 3 per cent.

Conservative MPs are concerned, however, that meddling with the review body awards could delay the reappearance of the "feel-good factor" and undermine the party's political recovery.

Pay deals, page 8

Prescription charge is increased by 25p

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PRESCRIPTION charges are to rise by 25p to £5.50 from April, an increase of nearly 5 per cent, the Government announced last night. Labour immediately accused ministers of sneaking through the increase in a parliamentary written answer and ducking

out of a Commons statement.

Gerald Malone, the Health Minister, also announced that the maximum charge for dental treatment is to rise from £300 to £325, but the value of optical vouchers given to children and those on income support would go up by only one per cent. Mr Malone insisted that Britain's exemption arrangements were still among the most generous in Europe.

Fees for prescription pre-payment certificates will rise by £1.30 to £78.40 for an annual ticket. Mr Malone said that about 85 per cent of prescriptions dispensed in 1986-87 would be free.

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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Tory drops in to win nomination

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

YOUNG Tory bloods will stop at nothing to win themselves the chance of a seat in the Commons. But few spend £1,000 to hire a helicopter to beat the driving snow and appear before two party agents for him to appear first in Surrey and last in Buckingham, to allow enough time for the trip.

John Bercow, special adviser to Virginia Bottomley, did exactly that on Wednesday night when he was invited to the final selection meetings for two seats with majorities of more than 20,000.

Mr Bercow, 33, was invited to compete with five other candidates for Surrey Heath, a new seat created by boundary changes with a national majority of 22,754, and Buckingham, with a national majority of 20,644 where the list had been whittled down to three.

Collins and the missing million

Joan Collins took a verbal lashing in the witness stand in New York yesterday in a \$4 million breach of contract case with her former publisher. Earlier, she confessed that she had spent the \$1.2 million advance at the root of the dispute. "A million dollars sounds a lot, but it actually isn't," she said.

Page 3

Media merger
A giant new media group was announced yesterday under a £3 billion marriage of the Express newspaper group with television station owner MAI. The new company will be run by Lord Hollick, MAI managing director.

Pages 6, 21

Accountancy exam
Results of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales' December final examination will be published tomorrow. Copies will be available from London mainline stations from 10pm.

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To be a marginal Tory is the short straw in the lottery of life

to be born British, announced Peter Butler (C, Milton Keynes NE) in a packed House.

This is what Rhodes was referring to when he said: "Is to win the lottery of life". The Prime Minister agreed.

Mr Butler, who said he was quoting Lord Palmerston, was received with cheers if not an impromptu rendering of *Land of Hope and Glory*. But his claim raises difficulties. First, it was not Lord Palmerston who coined the assertion, but Cecil John Rhodes. Second, Rhodes said "English", not "British". Third, it was not a one-prize lottery to which Rhodes was referring.

This is what Rhodes said: "Remember that you are an Englishman, and have consequently won first prize in the lottery of life."

More quibbles, of course. When (as in Butler's case) you are Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, you have better things to do than distinguish between one of our greatest Foreign Secretaries and a racially commercial adventurer.

English? British? From the

perspective of Milton Keynes, who cares? It must seem almost the same. And in Milton Keynes the pressure on libraries will be very great; there may have been no time for Mr Butler to check his references.

But the error we must correct is the idea that there is only one prize in the lottery of life. What about a second prize? This, surely, must be to be elected Conservative Member of Parliament for Milton Keynes NW. The numbers securing this prize are 01 76

— the Tory majority. Adjacent to Milton Keynes NW lies Milton Keynes SW. This constituency is third prize in the lottery of life, and was won in 1992 by Barry Legg (C): winning numbers 00 46 57.

There are also much smaller prizes, one of which is not even in England, but Wales, where Walter Sweeney (C) won the

you've only won £1, and spending it on a duff scratchcard.

Given those circumstances, John Major put up a pretty spirited performance yesterday afternoon. Tony Blair, thin-lipped with frustration, clawed the air for a few minutes on the subject of why key ministers (but nobody else) are receiving the Scott report six days before others. He clawed in vain: the Tories, baying to order, seem to have remembered that the party that bays together, stays together.

First, however, to question the Prime Minister, was Graham Riddick (C, Croydon Valley). Mr Riddick, a middle-class public school boy: Sir Malcolm Thornton (C, Crosby), quoting a socialist document, said public schools "produce social equals".

Of course Mr Major (as he reminded us) went to a grammar school. Nobody asked him whether, in his day, the senior boys received their examination papers six days early.

Yesterday he wanted to

MATTHEW PARKER

POLITICAL SKETCH

Social security cut will cost 20,000 jobs, say unions

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY, JILL SHERMAN AND JEREMY LAURANCE

A POLITICAL storm blew up last night over the Government's plans to cut social security running costs by 25 per cent, with predictions that up to 20,000 jobs lost.

Labour claimed the planned £1 billion cutbacks would push the benefits system past breaking point and encourage fraud. Unions and charities insisted the cuts in the £4.5 billion administrative budget would hit genuine claimants and said they could provoke industrial action.

Barry Reamsbottom, general secretary of the Civil and Public Services Association, said it was impossible to reduce spending so swiftly without ending the Social Security Department's policy

of no compulsory redundancies. He predicted that up to 20,000 jobs would have to go in the next three years.

Chris Smith, Shadow Social Security Secretary, said that any move to greater self-assessment of benefits would inevitably give the "green lights" to fraudsters and undermine attempts by Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, to crack down on false claims.

In the Commons, the Prime Minister defended the cutbacks, chiding Labour for carping on about money spent on administrative costs and then complaining when the Government cut them to protect services.

The Government is seek-

ing to cut back on administrative costs in the interests of the taxpayer." Mr Major told MPs. "It's right that we should try and make these efficiencies because the alternative obviously is to take the money away from benefits, which we don't want to do."

Unions are meeting DSS officials on February 19 to discuss the implications for jobs. Mr Lilley said he hoped compulsory job losses would be avoided, but civil servants remain sceptical. Mr Reamsbottom, who represents 50,000 of the 88,000 civil servants in the DSS, said: "If it's compulsory redundancies, then there's a chance we might resort to industrial action."

The Social Security Department was giving no details of where the cuts, announced in a letter to all staff from Ann Bowtell, permanent secretary, would be made. A spokeswoman said efficiency savings of £50 million had been achieved since 1989/90, but there was a need for more.

Sally Witcher, director of Child Poverty Action Group, argued that genuine claimants would lose out. "I would be amazed if they could bring in cuts of this order and not leave claimants with a worse service," she said. "If the quality of service provided by the benefit agency is affected then people are going to come to organisations such as ours."

In her letter, Ms Bowtell makes clear that the 25 per cent cutback cannot be made simply by working harder or pruning costs. "The commitment and professionalism of all our staff has enabled us to deliver a major programme of change and to do our work more efficiently. But we face a significantly tougher challenge ahead. To keep within budget and cope with rising workloads, we need to find business efficiencies of at least a quarter by 1998/99."

Since 1979, claimants for the 26 benefits available on the welfare state have doubled. One in six of the working population are dependent on state benefits compared with one in 12 when the Government came to power. More than 30 million claims are paid each year, including child benefit to seven million mothers and state pensions to the ten million retired. Many claim more than one benefit.

Efforts to curb benefits such as those paid to single parents

have had only a marginal impact on the growing budget. Mr Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, has therefore switched his attention to the remaining two prongs: fraud and running costs.

Last October, Mr Lilley responded with outrage to Treasury demands for a 5 per cent cut in running costs across all departments. In a leaked letter to William Waldegrave, chief secretary to the Treasury, he said it would lead to "chaotic" services.

At the time Labour wondered if this meant Mr Lilley was being asked to exceed the 5 per cent cut. It now appears he was. No details were available yesterday on how the 25 per cent savings in administrative costs over three years, announced by his permanent secretary, Ann Bowtell, would be made.

PETER LILLEY'S three-pronged attack on the social security budget, which consumes a third of state spending, involves a drive to reduce benefit payments, stop fraud and cut bureaucracy. The central prong of this strategy has run into an immovable object: the steadily rising number of claimants.

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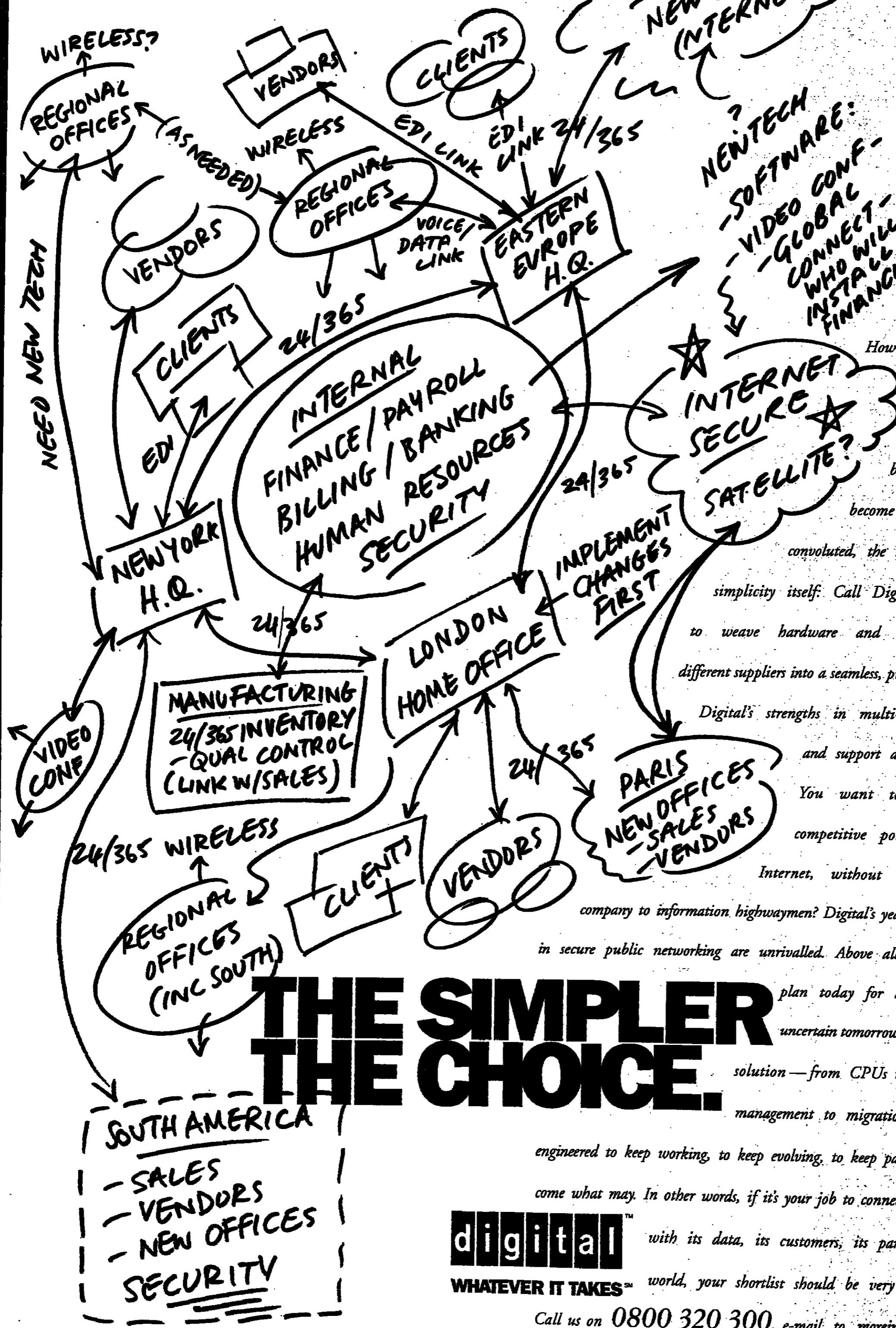
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Parents angry at cut in sentence

Canoe disaster chief is freed on appeal

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE managing director of an activities centre, jailed for the manslaughter of the four young victims of the Lyme Bay canoeing disaster, is to be freed. Peter Kite, 46, who has spent 14 months in jail, had his three-year sentence cut by a year by the Court of Appeal yesterday. With remission it is eligible for immediate release.

Kite, of Richmond, southwest London, had his appeal against conviction on four manslaughter charges dismissed by the same judges. Lord Justice Swinton Thomas, sitting with Mr Justice Harrison and Mr Justice Thomas, sitting with Mr Justice Harrison and Mr Justice Thomas, said that they were "wholly satisfied" that the verdicts returned by the jury at Winchester Crown Court in December 1994, were not in any way unsafe.

But they agreed to cut the sentence after hearing from Edmund Lawson, QC, representing Kite, that the longest sentence ever passed for sum-

mer charges of manslaughter caused by gross negligence was 21 months.

The trial judge had based his sentence on the fact that the charges were serious and demanded a term "of self-sacrifice". Lord Justice Swinton Thomas said: "We entirely agree with that comment by the judge, but in all the circumstances of the case is three years too long." He said the judges had agreed that an appropriate sentence would be two years.

Parents of the victims gathered outside the court, comforting each other. Dennis Walker, father of Rachel Walker, 16, said: "Kite was sentenced to three years, but will soon be free. My daughter was sentenced to death. Why couldn't Kite behave like a man and serve the rest of his sentence?"

Caroline Langley, mother of Claire Langley, also 16, said: "I am just sad and angry about what has happened. This is a

lifetimes sentence for the parents of the victims."

Kite was head of the St Albans Centre which was also convicted of four manslaughter charges and fined £60,000 at the Winchester trial. Four sixth-formers from Southway School, Plymouth, died on March 22, 1993, during what was described at the trial as an "ill-conceived and poorly executed" canoe trip.

The teenagers took part in

what was meant to be a two-hour paddle to Charmouth, Dorset, but the weather worsened and the canoes became swamped, forcing the teenagers into the water for hours. The other victims were Dean Sayer, 17, and Simon Dunn, 16. Four children and three teachers were rescued.

Dean Sayer's father, Gerry, said at his home in Plymouth that he was disgusted with the decision to free Kite. "I cannot believe it, he should have done three years because that is what he was given," he said.

Artists reap double benefit from apples

MEDICAL BRIEFING

THE Cézanne exhibition that opened at the Tate Gallery yesterday is predicted to be a great success, with at least 4,000 visitors a day.

Although the artist was financially independent after his banker father died, he was reluctant to travel. As a result he frequently painted similar scenes, be it a mountain he could see from his house, or the apples that always seemed to be inside it.

Cézanne was not alone. In his love of apples, but where, as he saw in their infinite and variable beauty — there are more than 7,000 varieties — he and his contemporaries also valued them for the effect on their bowels.

The slogan "An apple a day keeps the doctor away", was not based on any great knowledge of the nutritional value of apples, but was rather an acknowledgement of the gentle laxative effect of apple juice. In the 19th century, regularity of the bowel was considered as important for general health as regular physical exercise is today.

Unlike the purgatives of the Victorian era, apple juice has no sinister side-effects. The

Institute of Food Research has carried out extensive studies on the medicinal benefits of eating apples, and also the factors that make particular apples popular in different parts of the country. They are about to launch a travelling display, 'Core Science' about the science of apples.

The apples-a-day advice may have a scientific basis. Apples contain sugar, dietary fibre, potassium, vitamin C and some carotenoids, responsible for the yellow, red and orange colours in fruit and vegetables. It is probable that the carotenoids provide protection against heart disease and malignancies.

It may well be better to wash rather than peel an apple before eating it. Discarding the peel and leaving all the core halves the amount of fibre and Vitamin C available. Apples are like grapes; it is the carotenoids in the grape skins that give red wine its cardio-protective quality.

DR THOMAS
STUTTAFORD

Cézanne at the Tate, page 29

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Enid Ashby with the weather vane design eventually approved by the PCC

Vane dispute will not blow over

BY JOANNA BALE

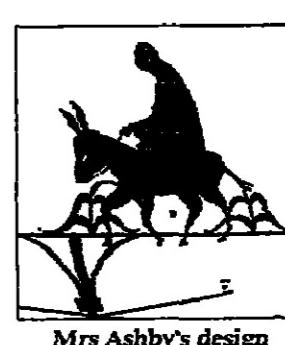
A DISPUTE over the design of a church weather vane that has divided a Kent village for four years has been resolved, although not to everyone's satisfaction.

Enid Ashby, 85, decided in 1992 to raise funds for a new vane for St Mary the Virgin, Rolvenden, to replace the original, which was blown down. After many hours making Christmas and birthday cards and selling lavender from her garden, she raised £800 and presented her design for the vane, a donkey standing on palm leaves, to the parochial church council.

But her idea fell foul of David Barham, the squire, and his wife Catherine, who dismissed it as "asinine" and tried to persuade the PCC to reject it for a more traditional arrow design.

The PCC has now informed Mrs Ashby that a compromise vane, designed by a local artist, has been chosen. Mrs Ashby has refused to hand over the money she raised.

"This has upset me a lot and at the moment I feel that I am not going to church any more," she said. "I thought it was an original idea. Every-



Mrs Ashby's design that was rejected

body has cockerels or arrows and I thought a weather vane with a donkey on it standing on a palm leaf instead of an arrow would depict the Christian story."

The approved design is an arrow and, as a concession to Mrs Ashby, the figure of the Virgin Mary on a donkey, within a circle of leaves, topped with a cross.

Mr Barham said: "The result is a compromise for the sake of village unity. An anonymous donor in the village has come forward with £1,000 and a blacksmith has been commissioned. A lot of work has gone into finding this compromise and I am now happy to forget about the whole dispute."

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHAREHOLDERS?

There is a great deal of work to be done. It is unlikely to be before the Spring of 1997 that a decision to proceed can be taken and formal proposals put to shareholders.

Full details will be made available at that time and there is no need for any action at the moment. For more background ring the Shareholder line on 0345 003 006 which operates at the local call rate.

British Gas



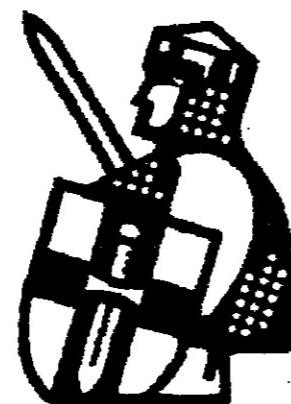
Fast-track libel cases would go to judges

By FRANCES GIBB

A FAST-TRACK procedure for libel claims up to £10,000 was unveiled by the Government yesterday. The Defamation Bill will introduce a summary procedure in which judges, not juries, can dispose of more straightforward claims.

The Bill will also allow new defences for defendants willing to offer amends to plaintiffs and to pay whatever damages a judge might assess. Providers of electronic media services, such as the Internet, will be protected against libel proceedings. Those who do not have primary responsibility for publication, such as printers, distributors or sellers, would also have a defence.

The aim is to get cases before a judge more quickly and reduce the number going before juries in long, expensive trials. Judges would have the power to dismiss weak claims and, in the case of strong claims, to make awards of up to £10,000.

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

TWO peers from opposite sides of the political spectrum announced a merger yesterday that will create one of Britain's most powerful media conglomerates.

The *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*, once part of the mighty Beaverbrook empire, are combining with MAI, owner of two ITV stations and a money-broking business, in a defensive move that will remove the threat of takeover from both companies.

Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of United News and Media, is a true-blue Tory who has pledged to ensure that his national newspapers continue to support the Conservative Party. Lord Hollick, chairman of MAI, is a card-carrying Labour supporter and eschews the trappings of nobility. He despises his City nickname, the Red Baron, and is referred to in the merger documents as Clive Hollick. Lord Stevens uses his title throughout.

Lord Hollick is expected to call all the shots in the newly merged group. He said yesterday: "I will probably continue to read [the *Express*] and continue to disagree with it ...

Express Newspapers: takeover threat gone

It would be crazy to change the political stance; it is part of their brand." Observers believe, however, that the Express newspapers, which have been the most loyal to John Major of all national titles, are likely to mellow their tone under the new regime.

Although the *Daily Star*, United's other daily, has long been seen as its most vulnerable national title, Lord Stevens said it was safe, adding that it was an "excellent" newspaper.

In spite of their differences, the two life peers have some things in common: they are both from the middle classes and built their careers in

financial services. Neither has ever had the absolute power over their respective press and television interests like the old-fashioned media barons.

Lord Stevens was born into a middle-class family, the head of which invented the first hearing aid to be worn in the ear. Although prickly, tough and proud, Lord Stevens shows glints of humour. "He is not really the kind of person you would have to dinner unless he were chairman of a newspaper," one associate said.

Regarded by some as a shrewd operator, others consider him out of his depth in Fleet Street. Since he took the helm of United in 1981, the circulations of his two flagship titles have continued to decline. The *Daily Express* sells 1.28 million copies, compared with more than four million in the mid-1950s. The Sunday title has a circulation of 1.33 million, against a high of 4.2 million in 1965.

Although Lord Stevens has made a last-ditch attempt to restore the titles to their earlier glory by appointing new editors and increasing investment, it is believed that they desperately need new management.

Lord Hollick is wiry and intense, a bulldog of a man, said by associates to be driven by ambition. He is a grammar-school boy from Southampton, whose father was a French polisher. He studied sociology, politics and psychology at Nottingham University, where he was president of the drama society. At 28 he became the youngest director of Hambros Bank.

He helped to sort out the Mirror group after Robert Maxwell's death but resigned his directorship soon afterwards. He moved into television in 1994 — an interest that stems in part from his Trinidadian wife, Susan Woodford, a former director of ITV's *World in Action*.

The rationale behind the merger is that it will allow both companies to make cost savings in the areas of news-gathering and distribution. The company envisages the creation of multimedia digital newsrooms to serve its national and regional papers and its television stations. There will also be opportunities for cross-promotion between the print and television operations.

The deal, page 21
Pennington, page 23
Global race, page 25



Archbishop Worlock, left, and Bishop Sheppard, whose united leadership encouraged ecumenism

Liverpool mourns death of Worlock

By KATE ALDERSON
AND RUTH GLEDHILL

TRIBUTES poured in yesterday for the Most Rev Derek Worlock, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool, who died peacefully in his sleep after a long battle with cancer.

Archbishop Worlock's close friendship and working relationship with the Right Rev David Sheppard, Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, helped to unite the city and inspired better relations between the churches. Their close friendship earned them the sobriquet "fish 'n' chips", because they were always together and never out the newspapers.

Bishop Sheppard said: "All the Churches have lost a great archbishop. The city and people of Liverpool have lost a great champion."

Archbishop Worlock, 76, died in hospital at 5.30am yesterday. His death came 20 years after he took up his post in the city and three days after his 76th birthday.

He had surgery to remove his left lung 33 years ago after contracting cancer and was admitted to hospital last July suffering from exhaustion. He had a brain tumour that was inoperable.

A single bell tolled at a luncheon mass in the city's Roman Catholic cathedral yesterday. The tributes praised a man universally regarded as a champion of the poor, scourge of sectarianism and devotee of Liverpool.

Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, said Archbishop Worlock was an outstanding servant of the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, said: "His ministry reached far beyond the boundaries of the Roman Catholic community and touched with grace all the Christian churches of our land."

The search for a successor is almost complete. Front-runners are the Right Rev David Konstant, Bishop of Leeds, and the Right Rev Patrick Kelly, Bishop of Salford. A popular choice would be the Right Rev Vincent Nichols, Bishop of North London and Liverpool.

Obituary, page 19

Runaways threaten beaver plan

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

A PLAN to reintroduce the European beaver to Scotland is under threat after children found one of its Canadian cousins at the side of Loch Lomond. It is the second thought to have escaped from a private collection.

Sandy Kerr, head of biodiversity at Scottish Natural Heritage, said the two types could create a hybrid that might prove sterile. However, he hopes the problem can be overcome if there are few Canadian colonies.

The female beaver found exhausted by the loch is now recovering at the Highland Wildlife Rescue Centre in Beth, Ayrshire.

Buying food for your heart's delight

By ROBIN YOUNG

THIS weekend, everything from pizzas and loaves to cheeses and chocolates is available heart-shaped for St Valentine's Day.

Besides running special offers on red roses bouquets at £4.99 and dozens at £9.99, supermarkets are also keen to emphasise exotic fruits such as granadilla, mango, physalis, tamarillo and passion fruit as alternative Valentine's Day gifts, and to draw attention to vegetables with aphrodisiac reputations, including red peppers, avocado, asparagus, and aubergine. For more old-fashioned romantics, oysters should be available from 40p each.

Advertised buys include:

Asda: Fresh boned pork leg £3.29, kg fresh beef rump steak £7.19, kg baby new potatoes 49p, kg, 400g carrots 49p, kg, 400g, almond fingers 49p for seven. Budget: Sovereign fresh chicken stir fry £1.59 for 1lb, Chinese stir fry £1.59 for 1lb. Oriental Express egg fried rice 99p for 450g. Angry yellow bean and orange stir fry 99p. Fresh pork mince-rib chops £2.69, kg, fresh whole duckling steaks £1.19, kg, oven-baked bacon steaks £1.19 for 1kg. Budget: Chicken tikka pizza £1.49 for 340g, chicken tikka naan £1.49, large salmon pillows £3.95, heart-shaped canapes 99p each. Waitrose: Coeur de Neuchâtel 65p, tiger prawns with mango and ginger dressing £3.95 for 100g.

Morrisons: Whole trout £2.84, kg, large chinned salmon £2.84, kg. Cheddar £2.89, kg, 450g, 250g.

Safeway: Turkey breast steaks £2.99, 700g, 500g, 400g, 300g, 200g, haddock fillets £2.79 for 500g, broccolini florets 99p for 500g.

Morrisons: Roast chicken drumsticks £1.99 for 540g, frozen, 500g, 450g, 400g, 350g, 300g, 250g, 200g, 150g, 100g, 50g.

Waitrose: Large whole oranges £1.99 for 870g, Sharomato oranges £1.99 for 870g.

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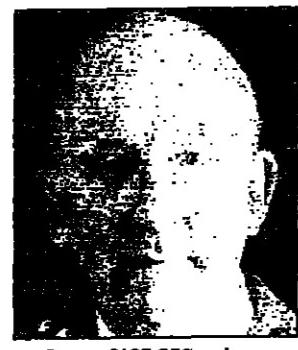
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Services face rent increases in £227m package



Inge: £125,850 salary

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A SHARP increase in rents for Service married quarters was announced yesterday as part of the overall pay deal for the 227,400 men and women in the Armed Forces. The package will cost taxpayers an extra £227 million in the next financial year.

Most rents are to increase by 10 to 15 per cent, and by 25 per cent for the biggest houses, in an attempt by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body to match Service rents with those in the

private sector. To cushion the blow, the increases will be staged.

Despite increasing concern over Army recruiting shortages, particularly for the infantry, pay differentials still favour the top brass. The four most senior officer ranks — field marshal, major-general and their equivalents in the Royal Navy and RAF — are to receive an average increase of 4.6 per cent (ranging from 3.9 to 5.6 per cent) and the remainder 3.5 per cent (3.2 to 3.8 per cent) by December 1.

The salary of Britain's most senior

military officer, Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, will rise to £125,850 and that of the most junior soldier, a newly recruited private, to £3,921. The higher award will affect 15 senior officers, including four generals, 11 lieutenant-generals and 43 major-generals.

However, the differential between the highest and lowest ranks is absorbed by two other elements of the award which only benefit Service personnel of the rank of brigadier and below. The men and women in this category will receive an additional "X

factor" increase of 0.5 per cent, a special "disruption" allowance, and a benefit change in the way pension liability is assessed that will mean the equivalent of a further 2 per cent in take-home pay, phased over two years.

The rest of the pay award is also being staged so that 1 per cent of the increase will be held back until December 1. The bulk of the award will be paid from April 1.

Last year the most senior officer ranks were awarded a 3.2 per cent increase. All other ranks received an average 2.6 per cent.

Nurses say 2% deal is insult to the profession

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

NURSING unions reacted with a mixture of outrage and disbelief yesterday at the gap between their award and the near 7 per cent rise for some junior doctors. Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, said: "Today's award is derisory. Nurses will expect equality with junior doctors. They are worth 6.8 per cent too."

The rises for doctors and dentists of up to 6.8 per cent took the highest paid consultants to £106,440. The nurses were awarded a 2 per cent increase in national pay scales plus an unquantified amount to be negotiated locally.

The Royal College of Midwives said the award was "insulting" and sent a signal to women that "their health and that of their babies is devolved".

Junior doctors' salaries range from £22,000 to £42,000 including overtime compared with £10,000 to £24,000 for nurses.

Unison said the pay award would do nothing to solve the staffing crisis in the NHS. Malcolm Wing, deputy head of Unison, said: "Staff will continue to leave the service in droves, leading to even more bed closures. School leavers will continue to look elsewhere for a career."

However, the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts said the national award of 2 per cent was "too large to give the complete flexibility that trusts want" to negotiate their own rates of pay.

Philip Hunt, the director, said: "Next year will be very tight financially. Trusts want to be fair to staff but at the end of the day they can't let pay increases eat into the resources available for patient

care." NHS unions are to meet on Monday to discuss plans for a nationally co-ordinated campaign to put an agreed pay demand to each individual NHS trust. Nurses sought total rises of 8 per cent and physiotherapists and other professions allied to medicine asked for 16 per cent in evidence to the pay review body.

The unions are angry at the Government's refusal to set guidelines for the size of the local element of pay award. Last year, nurses received a national pay award of 1 per cent with a recommendation that trusts should offer up to a further 2 per cent. By the end of the year, following threats of industrial action, all but a handful of trusts had paid the full 3 per cent.

Under an agreement that secured the end of the pay dispute last autumn every NHS trust will raise its pay scale by the full 3 per cent already agreed by the majority of trusts from 31 March.

In contrast with the nurses, the Government has dropped



its drive to introduce local pay for doctors. Consultants and GPs are to receive a national 3.8 per cent rise with a 4.8 per cent increase for dentists, with no local element. The rises will be staged, to ease the pressure on NHS trust budgets, with the final 1 per cent paid at 1 December.

Last year consultants were offered up to an extra 2.5 per cent on top of the 2.5 per cent national rise if they signed local contracts. Morwch than 90 per cent of consultants failed to take up the offer according

to the British Medical Association.

Junior doctors will receive increases ranging from 4.3 per cent to 6.8 per cent. However, only the few who do no overtime will receive the biggest rises.

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, said comparing the nurses' award with that of junior doctors was not comparing like with like. "The policy is not 2 per cent for nurses, the policy is locally negotiated pay."

He would not be drawn on the likely size of local awards. He said the 2 per cent national rise was a floor from which local negotiations could start. "You will not find me offering any central norm on what local pay should be. That should be left to local negotiations."

Defending the size of the increases to junior doctors he said: "They are an example of pay being targeted at specific pressure points to ease shortages."

Mr Dorrell defended the staging of the pay award to doctors and dentists, which is expected to save £30 million. "If you spend money on staff salaries you have less money for growth in activity," he said.

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"If you spend money on staff salaries you have less money for growth in activity," he said.



Dorrell: defended local negotiations



Hancock: demanded equality for nurses

Teachers' unions fear bigger classes and job cuts

BY JOHN O'LEARY
AND DAVID CHARTER

TAX-cutting Government accused of giving with one hand and taking with the other

THE phased pay award for teachers of 3.75 per cent brought predictions of further increases in class sizes, redundancies and shortages of staff in key subjects.

Teachers will get a 2.75 per cent rise in April, with a further 1 per cent in December. The award will be worth 3.1 per cent over the full year and cost an estimated £346 million.

Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, accepted the pay review body's recommendation of a bigger increase in starting salaries to attract more graduates. Entrants to the profession will be paid £14,001 by the end of the year, a rise of 4.88 per cent.

Mrs Shephard accepted all

the main recommendations in the review body's report, but decided to pay the award in stages to ease the strain on school budgets. "I believe this is a fair settlement which reflects the continuing need to ensure that the profession attracts, retains and motivates individuals of the required quality."

Head teachers said the phasing was outrageous and the overall increase would do nothing to raise morale. Local authorities and governors said many schools would not be able to afford the increase without shedding teaching posts and raising class sizes.

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, said: "The

review body made several recommendations to make teachers' pay more flexible, encouraging governors to reward good performance. The pay spine will be lengthened with the addition of half points between each grade."

From next year, extra payments for heads and deputies will be reviewed against "performance criteria" agreed with governors. The review body did not support Mrs Shephard's suggestion that incentives should be introduced to encourage teachers to take jobs in difficult schools.

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, said: "The



Shephard: says the settlement is fair



Blunkett: attack on ministers' "dishonesty"

authorities. Graham Lane, who chairs the education committee, said: "The pay review body recommended 3.75 per cent with no phasing in an attempt to head off a recruitment crisis and also to improve retention. Instead

teachers will feel they have got a bad deal which lowers morale, and class sizes will rise because schools will not be able to afford extra staff to deal with rising rolls."

The National Union of Teachers accused the Govern-

ment of robbing teachers at the top of the pay scale of £10,400 a month by phasing in their pay rise. Doug McAvoy, the general secretary, said: "The little that has been given will mean teacher job losses and an inevitable further rise in class sizes to the detriment of children. Instead of leaving schools to struggle to meet the increase the Government should accept responsibility for funding the award in full."

The last time the Government provided cash for the teachers' pay rise was during the run-up to the 1992 general election. Pupil numbers will rise by 80,000 in the new school year, adding to a 6 per cent rise since 1990 when the 43,500 teachers was the same as the current figure.

Nigel De Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and

Union of Women Teachers, said: "Only last November Chancellor Kenneth Clarke was busy handing out tax concessions. Today we are told the Government cannot afford to pay its salary bill on time. Another case of giving with one hand and taking back with the other."

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers told the review body that a rise of at least 7.5 per cent was needed to attract the best graduates. Peter Smith, the general secretary, predicted further redundancies among teachers because of the Government's refusal to fund the award.

The Association of County Councils said the award would mean authorities having to find an extra £25 million over the £100 million they were already spending above their current budget limits.

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Jailed activist was denied access to a solicitor

Republican wins £15,000 from human rights court

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING republican activist, who was jailed for eight years for his part in helping to falsely imprison an RUC informer, was awarded £15,000 costs by European Union human rights judges yesterday.

The judges ruled that John Murray's human rights were violated because he was refused access to a solicitor while being questioned about abetting the detention of an IRA volunteer who had turned informer. The ruling is likely to lead to changes in legal practice in Northern Ireland, where exclusion of solicitors from interviews is allowed.

But the European Court of Human Rights found in favour of courts on the right to silence operating in Northern Ireland. They voted by 14 to five against Murray's claim that his right to a fair hearing

had been infringed because the trial judge had drawn an "adverse inference" from Murray's silence during questioning and at the trial.

The decision to award costs to Murray, who played a dominant role in the incident, was criticised by Unionist MPs, who said it was "bereft of credibility".

Murray, 44, from Greengough Park, West Belfast, was jailed in 1991 after being convicted of aiding and abetting the false imprisonment of Sandy Lynch, an RUC informer. Among others jailed with Murray for their part in the incident was Danny Morrison, the former Sinn Fein publicity director.

The court rejected Murray's claim for compensation and cut his original claim for £36,000 costs by more than half after an appeal by lawyers representing the Government. The judges ruled by 12

votes to seven that the absence of Murray's solicitor from 12 interviews infringed his right to defence, which is safeguarded by the European Human Rights Convention.

Murray, who destroyed a tape recording of Mr Lynch's confession when police surrounded a house where he had been interrogated, stayed silent through all his police interviews. The judges said that the right to silence was at the heart of fair procedure under the Human Rights Convention. The question of whether those rights were breached by drawing "adverse inferences" from an accused's silence depended on the circumstances of each case.

"In the court's view, having regard to the weight of the evidence against the applicant, the drawing of inferences from his refusal at arrest, during police questioning and at trial to provide an explanation

for his presence at the house was a matter of common sense and could not be regarded as unfair or unreasonable in the circumstances."

But the judgment said that, because Murray chose to be silent, it was all the more important that he should have had access to a solicitor. "To deny access to a lawyer for the first 48 hours of police questioning, in a situation where the rights of the defence may well be irretrievably prejudiced is—whatever the justification for such denial—incompatible with the rights of the accused," it said.

John Wadham, director of Liberty, said: "This decision will mean that suspects interrogated under the terrorist legislation will no longer be prevented from seeing their lawyers for the first two days of their detention."

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Neil Fingleton with two classmates, Stephen Robinson, left, and Bill Nixon

Basketball boy aims high

By STEPHEN FARRELL

A 7ft 1in schoolboy who eats six Shredded Wheat for breakfast is aiming for a basketball career in America after being called up by Britain's national under-16 squad.

Neil Fingleton, 15, of Colgate, Durham, is still growing but already he can touch a 10ft basketball rim from a standing position. He took up the game only 15

months ago with the adult Stockton Mohawks team after a member spotted him playing football.

His height causes problems buying clothes and sports shoes—he takes size 13—but he hopes it will be passport to the NBA league in America. He said: "Obviously height is a great advantage but you still have to have good control."

Neil comes from a tall family—his mother, Chris-

tine, a cook, is 6ft, and father, Mike, a fitter, is 6ft 1in. However to achieve his dream he must add at least two stone to his 14st frame.

A nutritionist has drawn up a 4,000 calories a day diet, including four pints of milk. Neil's food bill is £50 a week.

Tony Hanson, the Mohawk coach and a former NBA player, said: "I'm sure the schools and colleges in the US are going to be interested."

Alcoholic lemonades renamed

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE makers of carbonated alcoholic drinks are to rename them in advance of a voluntary code of practice intended to avoid confusion between alcoholic drinks and those intended for children.

Bass said yesterday that it would abbreviate the name Hooper's Hooch Alcoholic Lemonade to Alcoholic Lemonade. Merridown, producer of Two Dogs Alcoholic Lemonade, is to rename the drink Two Dogs Alcoholic Lemon Brew. The changes are to be made as soon as present stocks are exhausted.

Whitbread has abandoned plans to launch alcoholic carbonates under the names of Lemonade Bomb and Cream Soda Blast. Instead, the drinks, containing as much alcohol as strong lagers, will be called Lemon Jag and Vanilla Heist.

Councils to crack down on roadside polluters

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

DRIVERS who run their engines while parked at the roadside will be fined under anti-pollution powers being given to local authorities. The Department of Transport announced yesterday that it was backing councils' calls for more weapons in the war against dirty vehicles.

Mr Norris, the Transport Minister, said council staff would also be given the right to fine drivers or ban vehicles if they failed roadside emissions tests. It is hoped that increasing councils' powers will lead to greater success in the fight against grossly polluting lorries, taxis, cars and coaches.

Local authorities had also asked to be allowed to stop vehicles as well as test and penalise them, but were opposed by groups such as the Automobile Association which argued that only police officers

had the training for such a task. The view was endorsed by the Home Office and has been accepted by transport ministers.

Mr Norris said: "These measures are part of our commitment to improving local air quality. This is an important move forward, allowing local authorities to take action where it is most necessary. There is no reason why a selfish minority of vehicle owners should allow their vehicles to pollute our streets."

He said it was hoped to bring in the new regulations later this year after trials in pilot areas. A spokesman for the department said the new powers would take into account the need for some commercial vehicles with frozen or chilled foods to keep their engines running.

Tourist coaches would have to be dealt with sensitively. "If

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Visit helps to erase ugly memories of papal mission to war-torn region in 1983

Thousands flock to welcome Pope on Latin America tour

BY DAVID ADAMS IN CARACAS AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Pope's Latin American tour, which ends in Venezuela at the weekend, is helping to erase ugly memories of his first visit to the region in 1983, when Central America was torn by civil wars.

Governments and revolutionaries were locked in power struggles fanned by the Cold War. In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas Government tried to embarrass the Pope, shouting him down at an outdoor rally. In Guatemala, a military dictator sent six people to the firing squad just before the Pope's arrival.

This week, however, the pontiff has been met by large and friendly crowds in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The armed conflicts that raged in Central America have been extinguished in all but Guatemala.

The region is now battling crime, poverty and social injustice, while the radicalism that the Pope encountered on his last visit has been overtaken by a wave of conservatism.

Celebrating Mass before 150,000 worshippers in Managua, the Pope expressed happiness at changes that have brought peace to Nicaragua, but alluded to the Sandinista Government's reign as a "long, dark night". The left-wing Sandinistas ruled from 1979 until losing elections to President Chamorro in 1990.

The Pope told worshippers that during his 1983 trip "I

could not really meet the people. Since then, many things have changed".

For their part, the Sandinistas apologised for their behaviour in 1983. The former President, Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinista Front, took out full-page advertisements in two newspapers and rented billboards to welcome the pontiff.

President Chamorro's term ends after an October election this year and she is not allowed to run again. The opposition Sandinistas remain the largest and best organised of Nicaragua's 30 political parties.

Thanks to divine providence, peace has returned to your country," the Pope told the crowds who attended the Mass. "The inhabitants of Nicaragua can now enjoy an authentic religious freedom."

As he departed, the Pope challenged the Managua Government and foreign donors to attack poverty, ignorance and joblessness in one of the continent's poorest nations.

President Chamorro, wearing a cross with her long white dress, escorted the pontiff hand-in-hand. A devout Catholic, she called the Pope's visit a dream come true.

It was El Salvador's turn to welcome the Pope yesterday. Hours before dawn, tens of thousands of pilgrims began streaming into a field in the capital for an open-air Mass.

"Pope John Paul II, we love you," people chanted at a military airport east of the capital. The flags of El Salvador and the Vatican flew from the cockpit.

There was a heavy police and military presence throughout San Salvador, and crowds gathered along the Pope's six-mile route from the airport. The pontiff was greeted by President Calderón Sol, who knelt to kiss his hand as a military band played.

Last April the Vatican named the conservative Fernando Sáenz Lacalle as Archbishop of San Salvador.

His appointment marks a radical shift from his predecessors who ministered during the country's decade-long civil war. The most notable of those was Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, whose name was associated with liberation theology, the radical grassroots Catholic church movement that was popular in the 1980s.

The archbishop was murdered by a right-wing death squad in 1980 after speaking out against the country's poverty and social injustice.

But Monsignor Sáenz Lacalle shares the Pope's dislike for controversial liberation theology, calling it a "re-reading of the gospel with a Marxist leaning".

He has said that such a religious philosophy has no place in El Salvador.



The Pope, making his second visit to Nicaragua, celebrates Mass in Managua with thousands of worshippers

Succession debate resumes in Rome

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME



Cardinal Arinze kindles hope of Third World Pope

Pope suffered an attack of nausea during his seasonal message and faltered to a stop. At 75 the Pope is no longer the athletic figure who took over with such vigour 17 years ago, joking that he was not only the first Polish Pope but also the first one who could ski.

It emerged yesterday that the Pope undertook the trip — his 69th since being enthroned — against the advice of Vatican doctors, who were anxious about the debilitating effect of such a gruelling journey on the increasingly frail pontiff. At Christmas the

old Archbishop of Milan, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, hopes for a Third World Pope, rest on Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria, 63.

Vatican sources point out that fears for the Pope's health when he toured Asia and Australia last year proved unfounded. The Pope intends to visit Slovenia in May, when he will turn 76. He also plans to visit Berlin, Budapest and Paris this year; and has said that he hopes to climb Mount Sinai together with Jewish and Muslim leaders to greet the millennium.

He now looks exhausted and moves slowly and stiffly, in part due to illness and in part to the continuing effects of the 1981 assassination attempt. In the Pope's absence, speculation has again risen over the papal succession, with attention focusing on the 68-year-old set up on the banks of the River Jordan in 1966, were having to give way to capitalist realities. There is Ein Zivan, a financially strapped kibbutz on the Golani Heights, where its communal dining-hall unpaid wages according to the value of work performed. This infuriated some of the pioneers.

Many analysts back the changes.

One member of Ein Zivan said: "I do not want to be a museum."

Birthrate up in France

Paris: Metropolitan France's population reached 58.3 million at the end of 1995, a year in which there was a 2.5 per cent increase in the birthrate after a three-year decline. In all, 529,000 people died and 729,000 were born, according to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. The average fertility rate was 1.7 children per woman of child-bearing age, slightly higher than the 1.65 of the two previous years.

Broadcaster shot in throat

Phnom Penh: El Mongkol, 40, a popular announcer on Cambodia's FM Radio 90, was shot in the throat after he left the station. The attack is believed to be politically motivated. The station belongs to Prince Ranariddh, the First Prime Minister. Human rights groups have accused the Government of trying to intimidate the press. (AP)

East Timorese seek asylum

Jakarta: Nine East Timorese, including two women, asked for political protection from Australia hours after entering its Jakarta embassy, apparently seeking asylum. An embassy spokesman said the nine would be staying overnight while discussions continued. (Reuters)

Israeli banks attacked over £3bn loans in kibbutz rescue package

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

TWO Israeli Cabinet Ministers yesterday demanded an inquiry into allegations that in recent years banks overcharged many of the country's 270 kibbutzim for loans, which the central bank estimates to be worth £3.26 billion.

Reports said that without the financing, at least 100 of the

communes would have gone into liquidation. The vast sum involved forced the central bank to deny a report in *Yedioth Achronot* which claimed that "correcting the mistakes will put the banks' stability in danger". Share prices of banks were hit for the second day.

Bank Leumi, one of the main institutions involved in bailing out the kibbutzim in a joint rescue package reached last year with the

Labour Government, angrily denied the allegations. The United Kibbutz Movement, one of the two main kibbutz groupings, rejected calls to have its debt mountain re-examined; it said any possible bank error would be smaller than the debt-for-giveness package.

The financial rescue plan, the rudiments of which are now coming under scrutiny, was launched as the socialist ideology of the

kibbutz was giving way to privatisation and attempts to increase individual freedoms. Many members were also deserting the kibbutz for life on the outside.

Bank Leumi alleges that the issue is being manipulated by the cash-strapped kibbutzim to squeeze more money out of a Labour Government in the run-up to an election. The daily *Maariv*, in criticising the controversial rescue

package, said it was "a desperate attempt to preserve a socialist way of life in a world where socialism has become at best, a bad joke."

The paper argued that "the State of Israel has no security, economic or social interest in ensuring the artificial existence of those kibbutzim whose time has passed."

It was only in 1992 that it dawned on most Israelis that the socialist ideals of the kibbutz movement,

first set up on the banks of the River Jordan in 1906, were having to give way to capitalist realities. There is Ein Zivan, a financially strapped kibbutz on the Golani Heights, where its communal dining-hall unpaid wages according to the value of work performed. This infuriated some of the pioneers.

Many analysts back the changes.

One member of Ein Zivan said: "I do not want to be a museum."

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9 1996

RK

THE TIMES



BT head rejects network concept

By GRAHAM SEARJANT
FINANCIAL EDITOR

HOPES that British Telecom might provide a broad-band communications network receded further yesterday. Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's new chief executive, conceded that he did not personally think there would be a single national information superhighway.

The idea of a single fibre-optic network in every household is wrong, he said. Instead, he envisaged a growing patchwork of links between different systems that would evolve at different paces in different places, using mixed technology, possibly including radio and satellites.

The Labour Party has watered down a deal to allow BT earlier access to the entertainment market to justify investment in a superhighway and connect schools, hospitals and libraries free. Sir Peter said BT would still accelerate access to a fibre-optic network for schools and possibly hospitals.

In the third quarter to December 31, BT's pre-tax profits rose 26 per cent to £829 million. Nine-month profits were up 13 per cent to £2.44 billion on turnover up 3.4 per cent to £10.7 billion.

The gain stemmed almost entirely from the timing of redundancy charges. They took £60 million in the quarter against £217 million a year earlier.

The bill for 8,000 job losses should still be about £400 million for the year to March 31, suggesting a final quarter charge above £200 million.

Sir Iain Vallance, the chairman, said there had been an encouraging upturn in domestic call volumes in the quarter. The customer base shrank by 37,000 in the quarter as cable companies took a net 100,000.

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United and MAI to merge in £2.9bn deal

By ERIC REGALY



Lord Hollick and Lord Stevens yesterday. Both said they did not expect a rival bid to thwart their proposed merger

Unlikely bedfellows 6
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The companies are to come together through a tax-free share swap, which offers a premium to shareholders. A holder of 100 MAI shares will receive 54 United shares, while the holder of 1,000 MAI convertible preference shares will receive 24 United shares. United shares rose 28p to 652p. MAI was up 69p to 448p.

United shareholders will own 50.7 per cent of the new group while MAI shareholders will own 49.3 per cent. It seems that MAI, however, will have overall management control. Lord Hollick is to become chief executive of the group, which has not yet been named. Sir James McKinnon, the chairman of MAI and former head of Ofgas, the gas regulator, is to become deputy chairman. Lord Stevens will be chairman, a position he described as non-executive but full-time.

Both companies said they did not expect a competing bid

to spoil the deal. There were rumours that Carlton Communications, the largest ITV company, would bid for United. Carlton would not comment and its shares fell 32p to 1,022p on the speculation.

The merged company will have two main businesses. The consumer side will include MAI's Meridian, Anglia and Channel 5 interests plus United's national and regional newspapers. It will also have United's advertising publications, including *Exchange & Mart* and *Dutton's Weekly*.

of the total audience. Similarly, newspaper companies with less than 20 per cent of the total national newspaper circulation will be able to buy ITV companies.

The business side will include MAI's money and securities broking companies with the exception of Wagon Finance, a car finance company which is being sold with a price tag of about £100 million. It will also include United's PR Newswire, which provides electronic financial information, NOP, and Miller Freeman, United's magazine publishing and trade conference organiser.

MAI announced a pre-tax profit of £62.7 million for the half year to December 31 against £53.6 million in the previous period. United reported a pre-tax profit of £138 million for the full year to December 31, against £132.2 million previously. After restructuring costs and exceptional items, the 1995 profit was £104.4 million.

United is proposing to pay a second interim dividend of 15.25p, making 23p, unchanged, for the year. MAI is to pay a doubled interim dividend of 4p.

Standard Life stance hurts Farnell's £1.8bn bid plan

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

FARNELL, the electronics distribution company, yesterday suffered a setback in its £1.8 billion bid to buy Premier Industrial, the US-based company, when Standard Life, one of its main institutional shareholders, revealed it would not support the proposals.

The Premier purchase has aroused controversy since it was announced last month because it would result in Farnell more than doubling its size and lead to a big increase in the company's debt pile.

Graham Wood, head of UK equities at Standard Life, justified the decision on the grounds that the fund management group believes the premium is too high, that the deal would dilute earnings and that Farnell will be encumbered with £430 million worth of

debt. But the company's unusual decision to publicise its position angered Howard Poulsen, chairman of Farnell.

Mr Poulsen said: "We are very disappointed that Standard Life has rather jumped the gun. We only had a short meeting with Standard Life in which to put our case."

But Standard Life's views appeared not to be shared by other big shareholders such as Mercury Asset Management, who announced yesterday that it had increased its stake in the company from 12.1 per cent to 13 per cent.

Another large shareholder, Scottish Widows, which holds 5.3 per cent, said it was backing the deal.

Farnell's share price slipped back 3p to 642p.

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Funding their voice, page 25

Amstrad confident despite losses

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM



AMSTRAD, the electronics group that announced 150 redundancies earlier this week, has disclosed first-half losses of £5.4 million. But the interim dividend is increased to 1.25p a share from 1p.

As a result, Alan Sugar, chairman and largest single shareholder, can expect to take home about £510,000 in dividend payments. He is also paid an annual salary of £195,000.

The company said the increase in dividend was meant as a signal to investors that Amstrad is turning the corner. Mr Sugar said he expects Dancall, Amstrad's mobile phone manufacturing subsidiary, to make a healthy profit in the second half.

Earlier this week, Amstrad said it would restructure, cut its workforce — mainly in Amstrad Consumer Electronics (ACE) — by 150 and close one of its factories costing it £4 million.

The company made a £25,000 profit in the corresponding period last year, and Tony Dean, finance director, said: "It is obviously disappointing to be in the red this half. We don't expect to make any further provisions for

restructuring, and we hope to see some strength now."

Viglen International, which sells computers in the professional market, was profitable in the six months to December 31, while Dancall, bought by Amstrad in 1993, had made a "respectable profit" in December as it overcame a delay of four months in meeting production levels. Mr Sugar said that the full-year results should, therefore, be encouraging.

Analysts cut their full-year profit forecasts from between £15 million and £20 million to nearer £10 million. However, the rosier picture for the second half and next year pushed the share price higher, rising 18p to 201p.

"The results weren't very good, but there is plenty of room for them to grow again," said Andrew Bryant, analyst with NatWest Securities.

"ACE should be back in profit in 1997, and the Viglen market is growing and there is confidence that Dancall could become a real competitor to the likes of Nokia and Ericsson."

Tempus, page 24

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Business start-ups increase

The number of businesses in the UK reached 3.7 million in 1995, the highest level for more than four years. According to Barclays Bank, the total business stock increased 1.6 per cent over 1994.

The bank's figures show that 448,000 sole occupation businesses started up in 1995, compared with 430,000 in 1994, an increase of four per cent. Mainstream business closures rose two per cent year-on-year to 440,000. The main growth was in individuals setting up in self-employment on top of full-time occupation.

TI venture

TI GROUP, through its Bundy Asia Pacific joint venture, is to invest \$3 million in a new factory in China to supply components to a new car plant set up by Citroën, the French company, in Wuhan, Hubei province, where it is to produce its ZX model.

French cut

The Bank of France yesterday cut its key intervention rate, which sets the floor for money market interest rates, to 3.90 per cent from 4.05 per cent. The five-to-ten day lending rate was unchanged at 5.60 per cent.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sale
Australia \$	2.11	1.98
Austria Sch	16.32	15.49
Belgium Fr	49.73	45.43
Canada \$	2.03	2.04
Denmark Kr	0.70	0.68
Finland Mark	9.41	8.81
France Fr	8.22	7.22
German Dm	2.43	2.22
Greece Dr	396.00	371.00
Hong Kong \$	12.50	11.50
Ireland P	1.02	0.94
Iceland Sk	5.200	4.950
Italy Lira	2528.00	2373.00
Japan Yen	178.20	162.30
Malta L	1.54	1.50
Netherlands Gld	2.698	2.468
New Zealand \$	2.43	2.21
Norway Kr	10.50	9.70
Portugal Esc	247.00	220.00
S Africa Rand	inf.	5.34
Spain Pta	198.00	185.00
Sweden Kr	11.38	10.50
Turkey Lira	1.59	1.51
USA \$	1.631	1.501

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank Plc. Current rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Latest salvos fired in the battle over single currency

Business leaders lambaste EMU

BY PATRICIA TEHAN

SOME of the UK's most senior business leaders have launched a scathing attack on European monetary union, arguing it would bring higher interest rates and unemployment and harm business competitiveness.

The criticism came from Sir Stanley Kalins, chairman of Dixon's, Sir John Hoskyns, chairman of Burton, Sir Alick Rankin, chairman of Scottish & Newcastle, Sir Michael Edwards, chairman of Charter, Sir Emmanuel Kaye,

chairman of Kaye Enterprises, Stanislas Yassukovich, chairman of the City Research project, and Tim Melville-Ross, director-general of the Institute of Directors.

Their stance against economic and monetary union (EMU) was in stark contrast to the sentiments expressed by Dr Ronald Schmitz, chairman of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, yesterday. He said that stopping the introduction of EMU would have disastrous implications for the single market and for Europe's position in the world. The

business leaders were writing in *Business Agenda*, a publication by the centre-right European Research Group.

Sir Stanley said business "must now gird its loins and fight with eerie weapon ... against those who seek to sell out the UK to a federal Europe". Sir John questioned whether the single currency was conceivable without European unification, while Sir Alick said that to join EMU "we must meet tough convergence criteria, pay up a huge entrance fee and put on a monetary corset". There is

growing consensus among British bankers that the deadline for the introduction of a single currency in 1998 should be delayed until economic criteria are in place.

On Monday Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said proceeding too quickly towards a single currency could cause serious political tensions. But at the German-British Chamber of Commerce yesterday, Dr Schmitz said: "Stopping the EMU train would spell disaster. It would mean running the risk of the hard core

of the European Monetary System breaking apart." This, he said, would mean that "continental Europe would fall back into recurring competitive devaluations, with negative repercussions for the development of the single market as a whole".

Dr Schmitz said: "I would like to see the UK exert a much greater influence over the design of the EU economic framework". If sterling did not rejoin the exchange-rate mechanism by spring this year, it would not be eligible for EMU in 1998, he added.

CBI calls on Blair to spell out policies

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS leaders last night said that Britain's economic strengths must not be jeopardised by a Labour government uncommitted to stable economic policies.

Although Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, welcomed the shifts in Labour policy towards a more pro-business approach under Tony Blair, the CBI challenged Labour to provide specific details for business on a range of economic policies.

Government ministers were angered when Mr Turner recently advocated a rise in real wages as part of economic growth, and some are sceptical about the CBI's declared policy under Mr Turner of political neutrality in the run-up to a general election, arguing openly that business ought to support the Conservatives.

But they will be more satisfied by Mr Turner's clear attempt last night in a speech at a CBI dinner in Manchester to put pressure on Labour to flesh out the bones of its policies on the economy and business.

Mr Turner praised the UK's stable macroeconomy, low inflation and flexible labour markets as a "sound basis for medium-term growth", and in a specific reference to Labour and the election said: "It is

crucial that these advantages are not put at risk."

He said: "While the Labour party has made some apparent shifts in policy towards a more pro-business approach, there are key areas where business disagrees with Labour's policy."

Business was concerned about four specific areas:

- Inflation: Welcoming Labour's "overall" commitment to low inflation, he said: "Business confidence would increase if Labour committed itself to a specific inflation target."

- Tax: Labour should set specific targets for the top rate of tax and National Insurance, and clearly state spending priorities.

- Social chapter: Emphasising the support of business for

the Government's opt-out from the EU social chapter, he said that business "does not want to see it ended. We are very concerned about the Labour party's commitment to do so" — and would be even more so if Labour supported extending a qualified majority voting in the EU in this area.

□ Stakeholding: Having launched the word into the political domain, Mr Blair must now clarify it and say what specific policy issues would result from it.

According to figures today from the CBI's survey, covering 15,000 outlets in retailing, wholesaling and the motor trades, shows that retail sales have now risen on an annual basis for four successive

months, after a year of uneven volume growth.

In January, the balance of retailers reporting an increase in sales volumes — those registering a rise against those recording a fall — stayed at 31 per cent. Annual sales this month are expected to continue to rise, at a slightly higher rate.

Trade in the high street in January was above average for the time of year for the second month running, and while stocks were still considered to be more than adequate, retailers expect a slight rounddown in levels this month.

Grocers, chemists, and footwear retailers saw the highest rises in sales volumes compared with a year ago, while confectionery, tobacco and newspaper outlets saw their first fall since February 1994.

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The CBI's survey, covering 15,000 outlets in retailing

□ Their Lordships announce a marriage □ Sparks fly at Farnell □ The perils of remaining mutual

MAI presents a United front

□ "THE benefits of synergy", like "one careful owner" or "would suit DIY fanatic", is one of those phrases that should ring alarm bells for potential buyers.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines synergy as "the combined effect of drugs, organs, etc. that exceeds the sum of their individual effects". Corporate financiers define synergy as the easiest way they know to separate over-ambitious management from massive fees.

Lords Stevens and Hollick define synergy, as far as one can tell from yesterday's merger of their respective companies, in two ways. There is the ability to advertise TV stations in newspapers that are within the same holding company, and the corresponding ability to advertise papers on those same TV stations.

Then there is the wrapping up of all the boring but profitable business services within both groups, which tend to miss out on the media attention to the rather sexier TV stations and newspapers, into one operation which can then sell to the same client list. One option is to cross-sell exhibitions, newsletters, market research and specialised business magazines while merging their individual management into the same team.

On top of these, there are rather less well-defined prospects for expansion as a larger group into electronic publishing and other more rarified areas.

The first thought is that MAI and United are swimming against the prevailing tide in creating a cross-media, whisper it who dares, conglomerate, at a time when Hanson and British Gas, albeit for different reasons, are busy unbundling. But media is probably the only area where the creation of a conglomerate makes sense — why else is the Government so concerned with the rules that allow this?

As part of this marriage, MAI gets its hands on the cash flow from rather more mature media businesses within United such as exhibitions, regional papers, periodicals and so on, with which to expand into who knows where. United gets proven management, in the form of Lord, sorry Clive, Hollick and his team, and a semblance of a coherent strategy that has never been available for view since it became apparent the

Express titles could not be sold. Note the departure of Graham Wilson, seen as Lord Stevens' right-hand man in the City. Should Stevens and Hollick even come to blows over policy, the betting must be that the latter will prevail.

MAI will not stop here, and the purchase of yet another ITV franchise-holder, perhaps Yorkshire Tyme-Tees, looks the next step. In this they will be taking part in this year's expected carve-up of the ITV map — in competition with Carlton, the chosen buyer of the Express titles until Michael Green lost patience with Lord Stevens.

□ WHAT on earth is going on at Farnell, a solid and respectable distributor of all sorts of useful electronic bits and bobs that would not normally trouble the scorer in the great corporate governance handicap?

Some questions for Standard Life



Two weeks ago Farnell announced a £1.8 million purchase of an equally uncharismatic but much bigger US business. Part of the deal, ambitious but put together by a team whose record suggested they were ready for such a challenge, was a £30 million rights issue.

Four questions should be put to Standard Life. Is this and the weekend assault against Michael Green's salary, just a high-profile public relations exercise, hatched to the fashionable corporate governance bandwagon? Did you initially agree to support the rights? If so, why the subsequent change of heart?

And has all of this anything to

Farnell and the institutions is rightly shrouded in secrecy, but there were precious few squawks from any as the underwriting fees were being counted. The deal caused some concern among some large shareholders at the size of the step planned, and the management set out to allay this with, to date, some 60 presentations. But Standard Life was apparently not one of those who expressed such concern.

Now the Scottish institution has taken the unprecedented step of saying it will oppose the deal at next week's extraordinary meeting, even if other institutions with much bigger stakes make such a challenge, was a £30 million rights issue.

Before such an issue can be launched, it is pre-marketed. This involves a trapeze around the biggest institutional holders, and Farnell has at least seven with two per cent or more including Standard Life, to see if they will back the move and underwrite the issue.

Just what took place between

do with your wish, frustrated when you were made an insider ahead of the deal, to take profits on some of your stake in Farnell?

Britannia walks a fine line

□ THE first building society to announce a mutuality benefits package for members was the National & Provincial. Within months, the society fell victim to the predatory attentions of the Abbey National.

This awful memory does not seem to haunt those societies who have announced similar loyalty schemes since designed to prove their commitment to mutuality. The latest is the Britannia, which has been working on the project since last summer. In the interim, Yorkshire and the Bradford & Bingley have produced schemes to give value to members in the shape of lower mortgage rates and competitive savings deals.

Both were against paying dividends, as such payouts depend on future profits. They argued that, if margins were squeezed, the distribution to members would be put in jeopardy.

The Britannia, however, seems set to follow the dividend route, believing that this is the way to persuade its members to buy even more of its products. But there is no guarantee that they will remain true. Aspiring borrowers may still spurn the Britannia if it cannot match the rates available elsewhere.

The Britannia believes that it is acting to safeguard its independence by depleting its reserves. A miscalculation about how much it will pay and in what form could still be fatal.

The real alternative

□ DISTURBING signs that arch-dry Peter Lilley is in danger of going native at the Department of Social Security. Defending job cuts at the DSS, he told the *Today* programme that "the alternative obviously is to take the money away from benefits". A telling slip, Mr Lilley. Individual benefits are fixed, although the total bill may be rising. So you are required to make cuts because the alternative is taking more money off the taxpayer.

Struggling Apple admits Q2 loss will exceed \$69m

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

APPLE Computer, the struggling American personal computer group, expects to incur a bigger loss in the second quarter of its financial year than the \$69 million loss it reported for the first quarter.

Gilbert Amelio, the new chief executive, also said that the company had pulled out of talks with all potential bidders.

The forecast loss is part of a new publicity offensive by the company to clear the decks after a senior management shake-up last week.

Apple is attempting to persuade customers and the stock market that it is still in control of its own destiny after several months of disastrous trading figures, intense takeover speculation, and the departure of Michael Spindler as chief executive a week ago.

Mr Amelio said that the second-quarter loss would be partly the result of further essential restructuring costs

within the company. He said that in spite of the bad financial results, the foundations of Apple's business were sound and that steps the company was taking to turn itself round in the next few months would boost profitability. The company is scheduled to report its second-quarter results in April.

Mr Amelio's denial that

Apple was in bid talks with another company appeared to scotch rumours of an imminent takeover by Sun Microsystems with whom Apple has been negotiating recently.

Mr Amelio said that the persistent takeover rumours had damaged Apple's performance and its share price, which is now about \$28, down from \$50 a few months ago.

The company has been taking out full-page advertisements in leading newspapers over the past few days, pointing out its strengths and promising that it can survive independently.

However, analysts believe Mr Amelio has an uphill struggle to salvage Apple's image and convince the public that it can recover from a string of strategic blunders as well as protect its share of the personal computer market, which has shrunk recently from more than 10 per cent to about 8 per cent.

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Speculators go on bid alert after MAI deal



Coral's profits have been hit by the National Lottery

All eyes focused on the media sector, as the City braced itself for a spate of takeovers and mergers after news of the proposed £2.9 billion merger of United News & Media and MAI.

Speculators did not have long to wait to find out the reason behind Wednesday's flurry of activity in shares of United News, publisher of the *Daily Express*, *Sunday Express* and *Daily Star*. But details of the merger with MAI, owner of Anglia Television and the controlling shareholder in Meridian, the independent television broadcaster holding the franchise for the South of England, surprised the market.

It had been assumed in the Square Mile that United was preparing to dispose of its stable of national newspapers. MAI shareholders will get 64 United shares for every 100 MAI held.

Brokers described it a defensive move by MAI, which had itself been seen as a possible takeover target. The speculators refuse to rule out the possibility of a bid for MAI from other quarters. MAI finished 69p higher at 48p with almost 31 million shares changing hands. United News was 28p up at 65p on turnover of 15 million shares.

But last night Carlton Communications, which holds the London weekday independent television franchise, was being ruled out as possible bidder for MAI. Carlton finished 32p lower at £10.22. Nevertheless, the speculation excited the market which had been pinning its hopes on a spate of takeovers and stakebuilding exercises after the Government's relaxation of cross-media ownership rules.

Those companies seen as potential takeover targets include Pearson, up 5p at 690p, whose name was being linked with Viacom, the US media group. There were also gains for The Telegraph, up 5p at 60p, and Mirror Group, up 10p at 207p.

Among the television companies, Scottish TV continues to be viewed as a takeover target, with the shares adding 12p at 60p, while gains were also seen in Yorkshire-Tyne Tees, up 53p to 900p, and ITV, up 2p to 350p.

News International, owner of *The Times* and 40 per cent shareholder of BSkyB, firmed up to 304p. The company reported first-half profits of

£168.9 million before tax. Last year's comparable figure of £56.9 million included a £401 million profit arising from the sale of part of its stake in BSkyB. This year's figure was struck before costs of £42.1 million relating to the closure of *Today* newspaper.

The market is certain to test the 3,700 level today after extending recent losses.

Monument Oil & Gas edged ahead 4p to 60p, supported by a buy recommendation from NatWest Securities. It says the weak gas market has overshadowed the value of Monument's Liverpool Bay gas contracts. NatWest has faith in Monument's management, and says the company is focusing again on future growth.

Shrugging off another record-breaking run overnight on Wall Street, the FTSE 100 index finished 17.7 down at 3,708.4.

Zeneca is moving in on the fast-growing migraine market with the purchase of Glaxo Wellcome's new treatment 31C90.

The drug is currently undergoing clinical trials. Glaxo agreed to abide by an under-

The news that Amstrad had plunged into the red during the first six months was countered by a brighter outlook for the second half and an increase in the dividend. Alan Sugar, chairman, said he does not expect to take any further exceptional charges.

He expects the amalgamation of Amstrad Direct and Viglen to save £3 million a year. The shares perked up with a rise of 17p to 200p as more than 7 million were traded.

Hard on the heels of this week's profits warning from Allied Domecq, down 4p at 507p, comes news from rival Bass that it is being hit by the National Lottery. Sir Ian Prosser, chairman, told shareholders at the annual meeting that although most of the businesses had been doing well, betting and bingo had suffered in the first three months.

The leisure retailing division had seen turnover plunge 30 per cent with Gals hit by the lottery and the Coral chain of betting shops hurt by falls in both margins and turnover. Bass reacted to the news with a fall of 9p to 734p.

Loyd's Chemists firmed a further 3p to 470p after recommending the counter-bid from Gehe, the German pharmaceutical group, worth 450p a share. That compares with an offer of around 405p a share from UniChem, which is expected to come back with a price of between 470p and 480p a share, valuing Lloyds Chemists at £588 million. UniChem finished 3p easier at 245p.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Attempts to extend the previous day's gains lacked conviction, with investors anxiously awaiting the outcome of last night's \$12 billion US Treasury bond 30-year auction.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt traded in narrow limits for much of the session before ending a tick lower at 1,094 in thin trading that saw 46,000 contracts placed.

Hartley 244p (-16p)

Arlo Wiggins 175p (-9p)

Rolls-Royce 206p (-9p)

Go-Ahead 290p (-11p)

Wilson Bowden 381p (-10p)

Waste Mgt Int'l 313p (-10p)

Big Circle 348p (-10p)

Cookson 285p (-9p)

Telesp 750p (-20p)

Courtaulds 417p (-11p)

REXAM 359p (-9p)

Rank Org 458p (-11p)

Mitel 374p (-9p)

RMC Group 1022p (-20p)

Closing Prices Page 27

the market had been looking for pre-tax profits of between £750 million and £790 million, so the final outcome of £829 million exceeded even the most optimistic of forecasts. The market was also pleased with the group's pledge to settle the dispute with Ofcom, the regulatory authority, by August without it being referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The drug is currently undergoing clinical trials. Glaxo agreed to abide by an under-

lying agreement to pay 10 per cent of the drug's sales to the European Commission to dispose of the drug when it bought Wellcome last year. Glaxo Wellcome responded with a rise of 2p to 935p, while Zeneca hardened 14p to 1,256p.

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**THE
TIMES
CITY
DIARY**

**Paper, pen
and digital**

NEVER say the President of the United States is not trendy. Jumping on the new technology bandwagon, Bill Clinton yesterday signed the new Telecommunications Bill — which deregulates the entire US phone industry — with a digital pen on a digital pad. Result: the Bill plus President's signature, went out on the World Wide Web. But was a digital signature legally and constitutionally binding? Unfortunately, the White House did not know. Anyway, no one was taking risks. To be on the safe side, Clinton also signed the Bill in ink on paper. Some things will probably never change.

Poles and holes

THE extrovert London tones of Sir Peter Bonfield are signalling a radical culture change of a sort at British Telecom. Sir Peter, fresh from the chief executive's seat from ICL, explains that he has spent his first 40 days "up the poles and down the holes" to get to know his new company, as well as meeting regulators in four countries. As it turns out, Sir Peter has not had enough safety training to be allowed up the poles yet, but spent two hours down a hole in East London's Commercial road "helping" engineers to make repairs and not fitting cabling 50 years old.

Book to order

THE Royal Canadian Mounted Police are first on the list for a new book to be launched next week. *How Not to be a Money Launderer*, Nigel Morris-Cotterill, the author, received the Mounties' request days after an advert for his new book went live on the Internet. A £20 cheque has already arrived from the Canadian Mounted Police College in Ottawa, and the author has pinned the counterfoil to his wall.



"It's good to talk money"

Rat pickings

ENOUGH of Fat Cats. Let's turn to British Rats, whose year, Chinese-style, begins on February 19. Traditionally, Rat years are ones of opportunity for those prepared to take risk. Lori Rei, a hand analyst of Liskeard, Cornwall, says "the Rat is a master at finding rich pickings". Those should be sweet words for some British businessmen.

Sir Christopher Hogg, the man who demerged Courtaulds Textiles from Courtaulds, and whose reparation for making businesses work harder becomes chairman of Alled Domecq next month. The outgoing chairman has just issued a profits warning.

Gerry Robinson, with Forte tucked under his cheese trap, should be aware Rat years are "an excellent 12-month period for new beginnings and fresh starts".

John Kemp-Welch, chairman of the Stock Exchange, should be pleased to know Lori predicts a year when markets and economies are buoyant, and things are generally fine. And Sir John Harvey-Jones can preach his gospel to new businesses that it's a year to "begin projects, launch new products and forge new links".

COLIN CAMPBELL

**Eric Reguly
and Ross
Tieman look
at the start
of a trend**

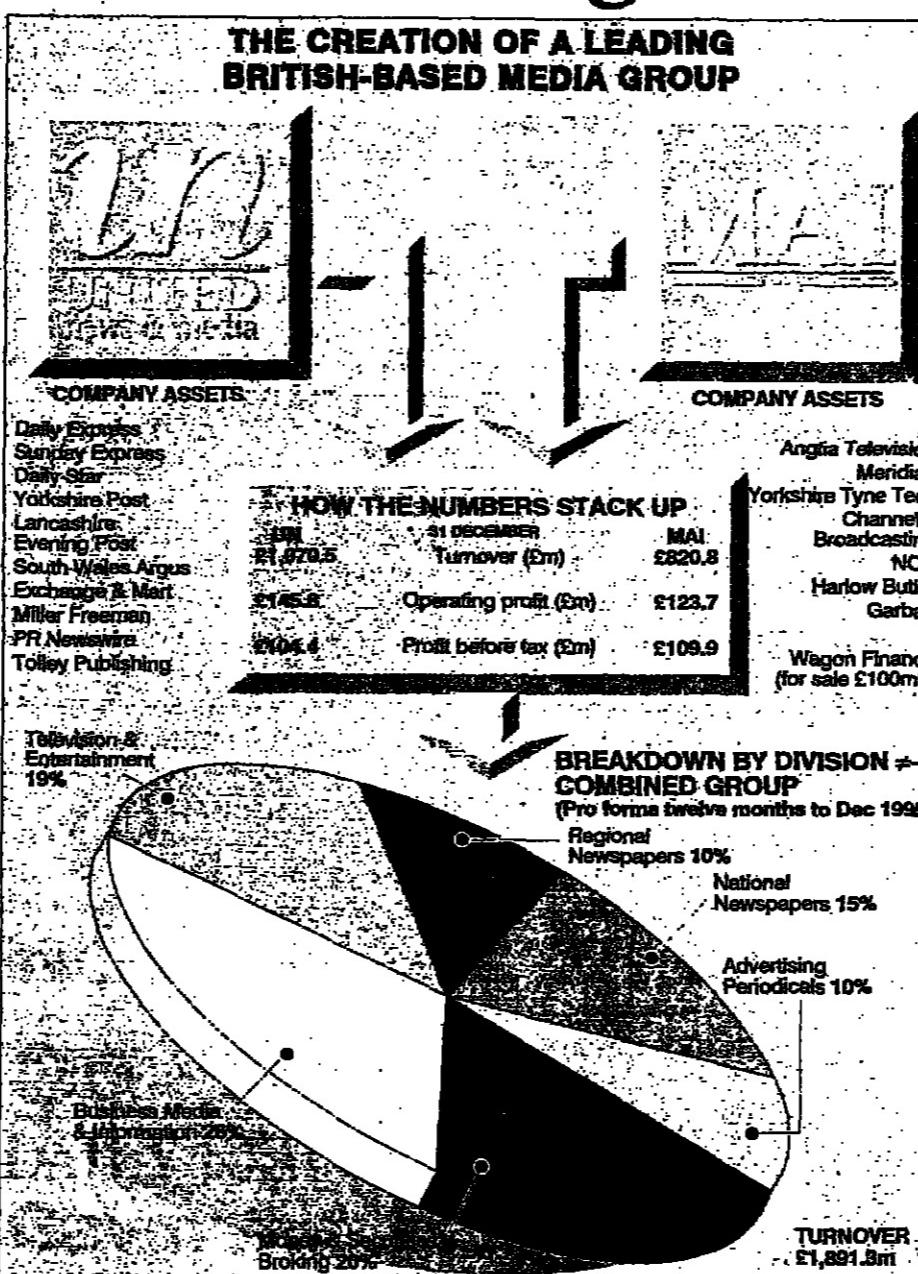
THE merger of United News & Media, a vintage, slow-moving newspaper company, and MAI, an aggressive television and financial services group, is expected to be the first of many such deals in Britain. This particular transaction was triggered by the Broadcasting Bill, now making its way through Parliament, which will remove many of the toughest restrictions on cross-media ownership. The age of the media conglomerate is here.

If anything, Britain is a latecomer to the trend. In America, sweeping changes in communications legislation have unleashed a cross-ownership free-for-all that has only just begun. The ultimate goal is to obtain access to residential and business consumers, be it through TV and radio signals, phone lines, the Internet, on-line services or newspapers and magazines. Any group that controls only one or two of these methods of access is reckoned to have a limited future; the winners will be the players that control many of them.

Lord Hollick, the managing director of MAI, who is to be chief executive of the as-yet-unnamed merged group, cites The News Corporation, the parent company of *The Times*, as a pioneer. News Corp — which owns dozens of newspapers around the world, America's Fox TV network and a 40 per cent stake in satellite TV company BSkyB — last year joined forces with MCI, America's second-largest long-distance phone company. MCI, which in turn is owned 20 per cent by British Telecom, bought a 15.5 per cent stake in News Corp for \$2.4 billion. The partners among other things, plan to launch a satellite TV service in the US.

The recent passage in the US of the Telecommunications Bill will accelerate this process. The Bill allows local, long-distance and cable companies to attack each other's markets, and will probably trigger a flurry of takeovers and partnerships. Nynex and Bell Atlantic, two US regional phone companies, are negotiating a joint venture in the long-distance telephone market. They, in turn, are expected to seek partnerships with multimedia companies so that they can provide services such as video-on-demand.

British media companies, in the expectation of more liberal cross-media ownership rules, have been thinking along the same lines. The Mirror Group launched Live TV, a cable channel, and bought a 20 per cent stake in Scottish Television. David Montgomery,



Mirror chief executive, sees television as the group's future. He has been lobbying the Government for an exemption that would allow the group to increase its TV interests. At the moment, it has little room to manoeuvre because it controls more than 20 per cent of the national newspaper market, a level that brings it to the ceiling on cross-media ownership under existing rules.

Pearson, the owner of the *Financial Times* and Penguin books, has also been driving hard in the TV-sector. It has just added SelectTV, producer of *Lovejoy* and *Birds of a*



MAI makes and broadcasts TV programmes such as those based on P. D. James's Adam Dalgleish novels

BUSINESS LETTERS

Accountants can fight back and work to restore image

From Mr David W. K. Chitty Sir, I wholeheartedly agree with Robert Bruce's report on the consequences of Mr John Cook's victory over the leadership of the English ICA (January 25). The English ICA has become increasingly burdened by a bloated central bureaucracy which is remote from the membership and which fails to address the issues confronting either the profession or British business. Few members actively participate in institute affairs and the institute has become publicly ridiculed by its expensive and pointless poster campaign tell-

ing the general public that they will "sleep better with a chartered accountant". Mr Cook's actions demonstrate that the membership can fight back. The next challenge is for members to change the constitution to require the president to be elected by a vote of all the members rather than by council members behind closed doors. The proposed merger with CIMA should be rejected as it offers nothing to the members of either institute except for an even larger central bureaucracy.

The Law Society has dem-

onstrated under the leadership of Martin Mears that a great professional body can be run democratically for the interest of its members. This should be an example to the members of the English ICA who now have a chance to assert their voices, achieve democracy, and collectively work together to restore the tarnished image of their profession.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID W. K. CHITTY
(Technical Manager),
Chantrey Vellacott,
Russell Square House,
10-12 Russell Square, WC1

Charge accumulating interest to tackle the problem of bill payments

From Trevor Graham Baylis Sir, I was interested in Michael Fleischman's comments on *Breakfast with Frost* concerning staying in business. He was proud to say "at least all my creditors were paid".

I am a tradesman and sole proprietor of a company and have traded for 27 years. In all that time without the support

from my bankers — Barclays — I would have gone out of business years ago and certainly would never have been able to afford to develop my invention of the Baygen Freepay Radio.

Some companies take up to 18 months to pay their bills. Others fold, leaving debts never paid. If the nation wants

to encourage new business,

the newcomer must not carry the interest burden created by others. I believe the solution to this problem already exists.

Banks, VAT offices and tax collectors charge accumulating interest on debts.

Companies should, by law, be able to enforce their practice.

The tradesman would add on a percentage of this levy to the Exchequer as payment for the enforcement of this rule.

Companies would not be allowed to dictate terms that might leave low-level creditors exposed or disqualify business opportunity on the basis of payment terms.

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR BAYLIS,

Haven Studio,
Eel Pie Island,
Twickenham,
Middlesex.

Extra zeros at KPMG taken into account

From Mr James Porter Sir, Much is being written about the size of partners' salaries in the recently published accounts of KPMG. Surely the figures are reasonable as reward for the risks taken.

The partners of an accountancy firm are wholly liable for damages they may incur

for failing, even after retirement from the firm.

Remuneration should always reflect on responsibility and, in the case of KPMG, the extra zeros are well earned.

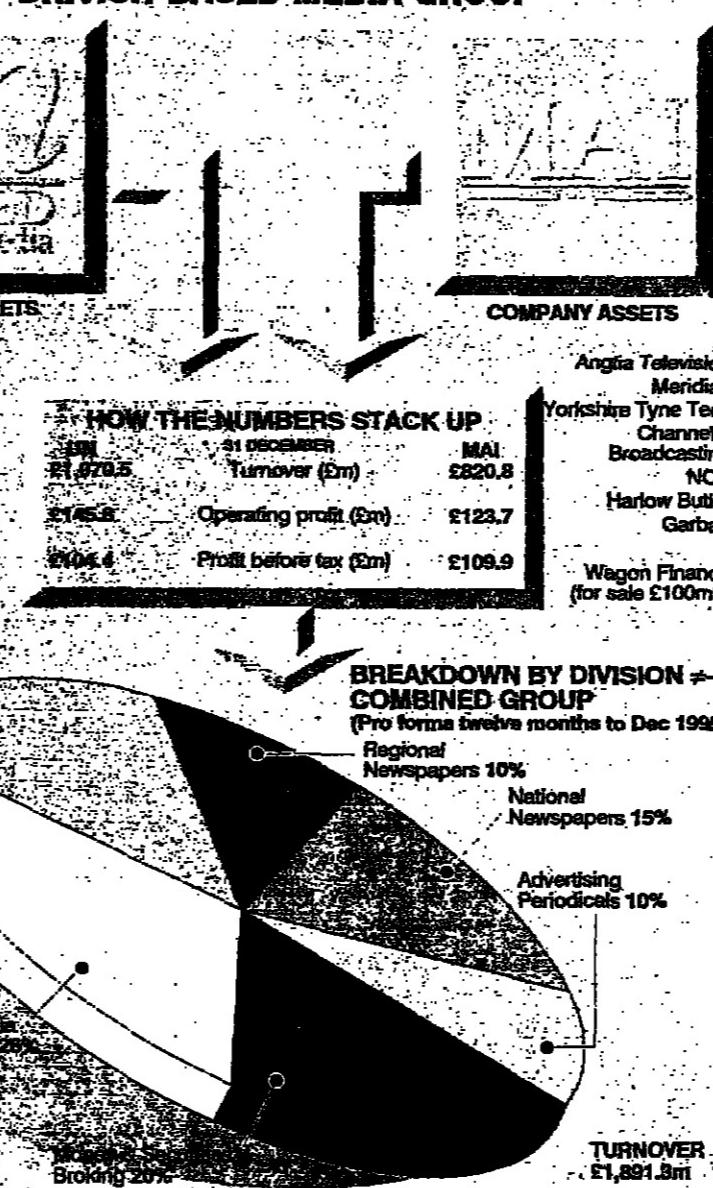
Yours faithfully,

JAMES PORTER,
31 Crifel Avenue,
Clapham SW2.

Hollick deal heralds era of new media conglomerates

**Eric Reguly
and Ross
Tieman look
at the start
of a trend**

THE CREATION OF A LEADING BRITISH-BASED MEDIA GROUP



the year to December 31. Advertising periodicals will account for 10 per cent of turnover, and television and entertainment 19 per cent. MAI owns Anglia Television and Meridian Broadcasting, the JTV licensees, and makes programmes such as those based on P. D. James's Adam Dalgleish novels.

Money and securities broking will account for 20 per cent, and business media and information 26 per cent. Lord Hollick said that the group's heavy exposure to business media and information makes comparisons with Reuters, the electronic information and news group, perfectly valid.

So what are the benefits of putting two companies together? On the practical front, cost savings are an obvious advantage. MAI will close its head office and move into the black and grey Express building on the banks of the River Thames. Some departments will combine and some redundancies are inevitable. Lord Hollick said cost savings equivalent to about 10 per cent of the combined operating profits of £265 million are possible.

The price, it said, was too high; it would dilute earnings at Farnell Electronics' proposed acquisition of the US industrial company, Premier.

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Standard Life's outburst came just days after it had questioned the wisdom of Carlton Communications' proposed bonus increases for its most senior directors.

Guy Jubb, the insurer's corporate governance director, said companies should reward management for "outstanding achievement, not mediocrities", with the implication that Carlton's executives had not delivered the required results.

But Lord Hollick sees the potential for cross-fertilisation, cross-promotion and the development of new businesses as the greatest advantage. With TV, newspapers and advertising periodicals, United and MAI will have access to huge swathes of the population, while businesses such as PR Newswire, NOP, the pollster, and the exhibitions division will bring it good coverage of the business market.

Lord Hollick said: "In our view, we have three or four businesses that are pre-eminent in their markets. What they need is additional resources, and this deal gives them that."

Not everyone is convinced that synergies exist. Dan Colson, chief executive of The Telegraph, said he sees no crossover, for instance, between newspaper publishing and MAI's money and securities broking businesses.

But the rumour, denied by Lord Stevens, United's chairman, was that the national titles were on the auction block. Andrew Neil, former editor of *The Sunday Times*, was part of one group trying to buy the papers, and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer, was said to be a member of another. Carlton Communications, the largest ITV company, was also thought to be interested and may end up spoiling the MAI-United merger by bidding for United.

The merger of United and MAI through a tax-free share swap will create what the two companies describe as a "leading British-based media group". Regional and national newspapers will account for only 25 per cent of combined turnover, and 18 per cent of combined operating profits, based on financial figures for

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When large investors find a voice

The institution's role as shareholder is changing. Marianne Curphey finds

institutional investors, who for so long have behaved like inarticulate, lumbering giants, have suddenly found their voice and are making it heard.

The most publicly transformed of all is Standard Life, one of the largest investors,

institutional giant, has also expressed "concerns" over Carlton's plans, but says large investors rarely speak publicly without first notifying the company of their intentions.

Anita Skipper, corporate governance manager at the Norwich, says: "It is a delicate balance between talking privately to companies and trying to reduce any misunderstanding between us and our policyholders. It is not a matter of washing dirty linen in public. During the row over the pay and perks for British Gas executives, individual shareholders felt we were not on their side. This shows them that we are."

So after years of secret meetings with directors and being accused of inertia and short-termism, is the culture changing?

John Holland, Professor of International Banking and Finance at Glasgow University, believes it is. His recent research has found companies make extensive use of behind-the-scenes talks to influence a company before it makes decisions on issues such as remuneration, perks, length of contracts, succession and separation of the roles of chairman and chief executive, but he is convinced changes are overdue.

One of the US's largest and most confrontational pension funds, the California Public Employees Retirement System, is already diversifying into the UK. "Vociferous institutional investors are well established in the US and it was almost inevitable that our cousins across the Atlantic should influence us," he says. "Larger shareholders tend to speak out when negotiations behind the scenes have broken down. They have discovered a very powerful tool: by speaking out about one company, they are signalling to others in which they hold a stake that they too should step into line."

The biggest UK investor, the Prudential, still prefers discreet negotiations, though it does have a secret list of companies about which it is concerned. Fidelity and Legal & General, likewise, have so far stayed silent.

Norwich Union, another

institutional investor, has increased in size, this becomes more difficult.

In addition, the rise of indexed funds means trustees often can no longer use the option of selling shares, as they have to keep the appropriate weighting for the size of the company.

UK pension funds controlled assets worth £30 billion in 1975; today they amount to more than £500 billion. One fund manager said yesterday: "With a 3 per cent stake in a company it is impossible to sell quickly without driving the share price down. As investors get bigger, their influence over and responsibility for the mergers will increase."

Nonetheless, the trend is likely to continue. There are few practical and legal reasons newspapers and electronic media should be separate businesses anymore. Not all the mergers will succeed. United and MAI, however, have to be given credit for their pioneering spirit.

Trust Cellphones Direct to make a world of difference to digital phone prices. With FREE connection to the Vodafone PersonalWorld Tariff, so you can use the phone throughout the UK, most of Europe and beyond on the GSM international network. With digital call clarity and absolute confidentiality.

Simply phone us with your credit card details to receive your phone plus valuable extras within 4 working days.

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Equities extend their losses

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Breach in denial of accused's access to lawyer

Murray v United Kingdom
(Case No 41/1994/488/570)

Before R. Ryssdal, President and Judges: R. Bernhardt, F. Mätscher, L.-E. Pettit, B. Welsh, N. Valtios, S. K. Martens, E. Palm, I. Foighel, R. Pekkanen, N. A. Loinou, F. Bigi, Sir John Freeland, M. A. Lopez Rocha, L. Wildhaber, J. Makarczyk, D. Gotchev, K. Jungwiert, U. Lohmus

Registrar H. Pezzold

Judgment February 8

The European Court of Human Rights held, by 12 votes to 7, that there had been a violation of paragraph 1, taken in conjunction with paragraph 3(e), of article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights as regards a defendant's lack of access to a lawyer during the first 48 hours of his detention.

The Court also held, by 14 votes to 5, that there had been no breach of article 6, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Convention arising out of the drawing of adverse inferences on account of the defendant's silence.

Although not specifically mentioned in article 6, there was no doubt that the right to remain silent under police questioning and self-incrimination were generally recognised international standards which lay at the heart of the notion of a fair procedure under article 6.

Whether the drawing of adverse inferences from an accused's silence infringed article 6 was a matter to be determined in the light of all the circumstances of the case, having particular regard to the situations where inferences might be drawn, the weight attached to them by the national courts in their assessment of the evidence and the degree of compulsion inherent in the situation.

Article 6 of the Convention provides:

"In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interests of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice."

"2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law."

"3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights: ... (c) to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require."

John Murray was arrested on January 7, 1990 in a house in which a Provisional Irish Republican Army informer (Mr L) had been held captive.

He was taken to the police station, where a detective superintendent, pursuant to the Northern Ireland Emergency Provisions Act 1987, decided to delay his trial by a period of 48 hours, considering that such access would interfere with police operations against terrorism.

The applicant was cautioned by the police under the Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 No 1987 (NI 20) that adverse inference might be drawn if he failed to answer questions at his pre-trial stage.

On January 8 and 9, 1990 the applicant was interviewed 12 times. Before each interview he was either cautioned or reminded that he was under caution. The applicant remained silent throughout those interviews. He saw a solicitor for the first time before the final two interviews but the solicitor was not allowed to attend.

On May 8, 1991 the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, sitting without a jury, sentenced the applicant to eight years imprisonment for aiding and abetting the false imprisonment of Mr L.

The judge, exercising his discretion under the 1988 Order, drew adverse inferences from the fact that the applicant failed to offer an explanation for his presence at the house and had remained silent during the trial. The applicant's appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland on July 4, 1992.

The application was lodged with the European Commission of Human Rights on August 16, 1991. It was declared admissible on January 18, 1994.

Having attempted unsuccessfully to secure a friendly settlement, the Commission drew up a report on June 27, 1994 which it established the facts of the case and expressed the opinion that there had been no violation of article 6, paragraphs 1 and 2 (5 votes to 4). There had been a violation of article 6, paragraph 1 (13 votes to 4) and it was not necessary to examine whether there had been a violation of article 14 in conjunction with article 6 (14 votes to 3).

On the other hand, the Court

deemed it equally obvious that those immunities could not and should not prevent that the accused's silence, in situations which clearly called for an explanation from him, be taken into account in assessing the persuasiveness of the evidence adduced by the prosecution.

Wherever the line between these two extremes was to be drawn, it followed from this understanding of "the right to silence" that the question whether the right was absolute had to be answered in the affirmative.

It could not be said therefore that an accused's decision to remain silent throughout criminal proceedings should necessarily have no implications when the trial court sought to evaluate the evidence against him. In particular, the UN Convention pointed out established international standards in that area while providing for the right to silence and the privilege against self-incrimination, were silent on that point.

Whether the drawing of adverse inferences from an accused's silence infringed article 5 was a matter to be determined in the light of all the circumstances of the case, having particular regard to the situations where inferences might be drawn, the weight attached to them by the national courts in their assessment of the evidence and the degree of compulsion inherent in the situation.

As to the degree of compulsion involved in the present case, it was recalled that the applicant was in fact able to remain silent. Notwithstanding the repeated warnings as to the possibility that inferences might be drawn from his silence, he did not make any statements to the police and did not give evidence during his trial.

Moreover, under article 4(5) of the 1988 Order he remained a non-compellable witness. Thus his insistence in maintaining silence throughout the proceedings did not amount to a criminal offence or contempt of court. Furthermore, as had been stressed in national court decisions, silence, in itself, could not be regarded as an indication of guilt.

It was only if the evidence against the accused called for an explanation in which the accused ought to be in a position to give a failure to give any explanation "may as a matter of common sense allow the drawing of an inference that there is no explanation and that the accused is guilty".

Conversely, if the case presented by the prosecution had so little evidential value that it called for no answer, a failure to provide one could not justify an inference of guilt.

Admittedly a system which warned the accused, who was possibly without legal assistance, in the applicant's case, that adverse inferences might be drawn from a refusal to provide an explanation to the police for his absence at the scene of crime or to testify during his trial, while taken in conjunction with the weight of the case against him, involved a certain level of indirect compulsion.

However, since the applicant could not be compelled to speak or

to testify, as indicated above, that factor on its own could not be decisive. The Court rather concentrated its attention on the role played by the inferences in the proceedings against the applicant and especially in his conviction.

In its judgment, the European Court of Human Rights held as follows:

I Alleged violation of article 6

A Article 6 paragraphs 1 and 2: right to silence

The Court, confining its attention to the facts of the case, considered whether the drawing of inferences against the applicant under articles 4 and 6 of the 1988 Order rendered the criminal proceedings against him, unfair within the meaning of article 5 of the Convention.

It was recalled in that context that no inference was drawn under article 3 of the order. It was not the Court's role to examine whether, in general, the drawing of inferences under the scheme contained in the order was comparable with the notion of a fair hearing under article 6 (see, inter alia, *Brogan and Others v United Kingdom* (*The Times* November 30, 1988; Series A No 145-8, p29, paragraph 53).

Although not specifically mentioned in article 6 of the Convention, there could be no doubt that the right to remain silent under police questioning and the privilege against self-incrimination were generally recognised international standards which lay at the heart of the notion of a fair procedure under article 6.

The judge, exercising his discretion under the 1988 Order, drew adverse inferences from the fact that the applicant failed to offer an explanation for his presence at the house and had remained silent during the trial. The applicant's appeal was dismissed by the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland on July 4, 1992.

The application was lodged with the European Commission of Human Rights on August 16, 1991. It was declared admissible on January 18, 1994.

Having attempted unsuccessfully to secure a friendly settlement, the Commission drew up a report on June 27, 1994 which it established the facts of the case and expressed the opinion that there had been no violation of article 6, paragraphs 1 and 2 (5 votes to 4). There had been a violation of article 6, paragraph 1 (13 votes to 4) and it was not necessary to examine whether there had been a violation of article 14 in conjunction with article 6 (14 votes to 3).

The Court did not consider that it was called upon to give an abstract analysis of the scope of those immunities and, in particular, on what constituted "improper compulsion".

What was at stake in the case was whether those immunities were absolute in the sense that the exercise by an accused of the right to silence could not under any circumstances be used against him at trial or, alternatively, whether informing him in advance that under certain conditions, his silence might be so used, was always to be regarded as "improper compulsion".

On the one hand, it was self-evident that it was incompatible with the principles under consideration to base a conviction solely or mainly on the accused's silence or on a refusal to answer questions or to give evidence himself.

On the other hand, the Court

deemed it equally obvious that those immunities could not and should not prevent that the accused's silence, in situations which clearly called for an explanation from him, be taken into account in assessing the persuasiveness of the evidence adduced by the prosecution.

Wherever the line between these two extremes was to be drawn, it followed from this understanding of "the right to silence" that the question whether the right was absolute had to be answered in the affirmative.

It could not be said therefore that an accused's decision to remain silent throughout criminal proceedings should necessarily have no implications when the trial court sought to evaluate the evidence against him. In particular, the UN Convention pointed out established international standards in that area while providing for the right to silence and the privilege against self-incrimination, were silent on that point.

Whether the drawing of adverse inferences from an accused's silence infringed article 5 was a matter to be determined in the light of all the circumstances of the case, having particular regard to the situations where inferences might be drawn, the weight attached to them by the national courts in their assessment of the evidence and the degree of compulsion inherent in the situation.

As to the degree of compulsion involved in the present case, it was recalled that the applicant was in fact able to remain silent. Notwithstanding the repeated warnings as to the possibility that inferences might be drawn from his silence, he did not make any statements to the police and did not give evidence during his trial.

The question in each particular case was whether the evidence adduced by the prosecution was sufficiently strong to require an answer. The national court could not conclude that the accused was guilty merely because he chose to remain silent.

As to the degree of compulsion involved in the present case, it was recalled that the applicant was in fact able to remain silent. Notwithstanding the repeated warnings as to the possibility that inferences might be drawn from his silence, he did not make any statements to the police and did not give evidence during his trial.

Moreover, under article 4(5) of the 1988 Order he remained a non-compellable witness. Thus his insistence in maintaining silence throughout the proceedings did not amount to a criminal offence or contempt of court. Furthermore, as had been stressed in national court decisions, silence, in itself, could not be regarded as an indication of guilt.

It was only if the evidence against the accused called for an explanation in which the accused ought to be in a position to give an explanation "may as a matter of common sense allow the drawing of an inference that there is no explanation and that the accused is guilty".

Conversely, if the case presented by the prosecution had so little evidential value that it called for no answer, a failure to provide one could not justify an inference of guilt.

Admittedly a system which warned the accused, who was possibly without legal assistance, in the applicant's case, that adverse inferences might be drawn from a refusal to provide an explanation to the police for his absence at the scene of crime or to testify during his trial, while taken in conjunction with the weight of the case against him, involved a certain level of indirect compulsion.

However, since the applicant could not be compelled to speak or

to testify, as indicated above, that factor on its own could not be decisive. The Court rather concentrated its attention on the role played by the inferences in the proceedings against the applicant and especially in his conviction.

In that context, it was recalled that those immunities could not and should not prevent that the accused's silence, in situations which clearly called for an explanation from him, be taken into account in assessing the persuasiveness of the evidence adduced by the prosecution.

It was recalled in that context that no inference was drawn under article 3 of the order. It was not the Court's role to examine whether, in general, the drawing of inferences under the scheme contained in the order was comparable with the notion of a fair hearing under article 5 of the Convention.

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■ THEATRE

A melancholy study of the game of life? Storey's *The Changing Room* is revived in London



■ VISUAL ART

From the Tate's Cézanne show: the magnificent *Still Life with Apples* is today's choice



THE TIMES ARTS



■ MUSIC

Flashes of insight, but also some indulgences, in Roger Norrington's exploration of Hector Berlioz



■ TOMORROW

Homage to an eminent Victorian: the centenary of Lord Leighton is celebrated with a fine exhibition

THEATRE: Rugby league drama in a David Storey classic; and an even-tempered portrait of comic Tommy Cooper

Life's a pitch, and then you die

There is something odd, tragic and, for those of us who admire the man, highly satisfying in finding David Storey's rugby-football drama ensconced in the West End as part of a season of Royal Court "classics". Throughout the 1980s the playhouse that had made his name as a dramatist treated him as a non-person, forcing him to give other theatres the work he had written with its proscenium arch in mind and, I suspect, stemming his creative flow as a result. But a new regime is at last making what, next to the production of a new Storey play, is the best kind of reparation.

If I had to pick a personal favourite from the work he wrote in the late 1960s and the 1970s, it would be his *Contractor*. Maybe next year the Court will find the courage to restage a play that requires a tent to be meticulously erected in Act I and conscientiously dismantled in Act II. But the piece

The Changing Room
Duke of York's

at the Duke of York's is an excellent example of Storey's ability to evoke lives from snippets and a society from those lives. Less becomes more. He calls the play *The Changing Room* and leaves you feeling that you are seeing a changing world.

The main event, a rugby league match somewhere in Yorkshire, occurs offstage. Nothing of obvious import happens amid the dingy brown benches, the grey-green plaster, the clothes hooks and (at the back) the dreary white tiles of a locker room that would have any modern rugby-league pro on the fax to his agent with demands for hardship pay.

The players prepare for the game, they stagger in frozen and dirty at half-time and then dress and make their farewells, leaving the decrepit cleaner we met at the beginning to end the play with another despondent shovelling of the brush. Add to this a pep talk from the coach, a couple of visits to the changing room by the club chairman, a casual frisking of the players by the ref, the substitution of a half-concussed forward, and that's about it. The play might almost be one of those documentaries for television that end with a studio discussion about the future of the sport between men called Brian and Ron.

Certainly, James Macdonald directs it with admirable attention to



Knock-on effects: Philip Martin Brown (Sandford), Brendan Coyle (Kendal), and Philip Whitchurch (Walsh) in David Storey's behind-the-scrum dramatisation

detail. And, although one or two of the bodies onstage might have trouble surviving a sprint for a taxi down St Martin's Lane, his 22-man cast create a credibly sweaty, authentically male atmosphere.

Character after character edges into being, amid the mildly salacious banter and the smell of resin: Philip Whitchurch as the laughing boy whose idea of fun is urinating

in the team bath; Brendan Coyle as the player who, even when half-conscious, clings pathetically to the tool-kit with which he plans to build shelves for the unfaithful wife who is ruining his game; Simon Wolfe as the wary mother's boy who examines each word for the possibility of offence; and, most significantly, David Hargreaves as the club's top dog and Ewan

Hooper as its bottom one. The chairman is a rich builder who never appears without his accountant, gives the appearance of having to fake an enthusiasm for the game, and means about the deteriorating quality of everything from bricks to chickens to men.

The cleaner's nostalgia for old days when colliers played rugby after 16 hours underground isn't to

be taken so seriously, for he is a miserable old git who never watches a game. Nevertheless, he too adds to the play's often melancholy feel. As in much of Storey's work, a sense of unease and loss is all about.

But so, if only briefly, is something rare in Storey. You feel it when the time to face the crowd approaches and even the jokers go

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Frankie and Tommy
Everyman, Liverpool

of sand encircled by old props baskets with a curtain stage at the rear, its proscenium arch fashioned from corrugated iron (designer Ashley Sharp).

Actually this is a story of two men, of the short-lived double act of Tommy Cooper and little Frankie Lyons. The latter went back to working sheetmetal after his battle with Cooper's growing ego. The surnames are no coincidence — the dramatist is Frankie's son.

As a consequence, Cooper is not simply fondly remembered. Combining research and poetic licence, Lyons Jr is really exploring the competitive aspect of double acts, the unfunny side of an obsessively ambitious comic, and the difference between large and small talent.

Speirs is not Cooper reincarnated. He has not got the vocal rasp, and the young Cooper was in fact more skeletal than hefty. Still, he builds up a quite complex character, sometimes hyperactive like an insecure child, sometimes bullishy crushing, maybe just driven, but perhaps a sharp careerist.

This is not a play of dazzling genius or depth. Ben Fox's basically affable, unbluffing Frankie is not the Sauer of light entertainment. The escalating rows could also be condensed. Nevertheless, the duo's interactions, with Cooper warding off intimacy by playing the joker, are very believably scripted.

KATE BASSETT

Richard Cork continues his guide to the Tate's Cézanne retrospective



"Even the humblest objects were painted sumptuously": Cézanne's *Still Life with Apples*, 1893-94. Private collection

In Cézanne's day, still life was regarded as a rather inferior subject. But with typical defiance he insisted on painting even the humblest objects in a grand and sumptuous manner.

Still Life with Apples, painted when he was in his mid-twenties, is among the most defensible of these paintings. He liked injecting tension by making the objects tilt in unexpected directions. But that does not wholly

explain why the oval mouth of the green ceramic vase has been widened so surprisingly. When it suited him, Cézanne played around with perspective. Different components in *Still Life with Apples* seem to be viewed from different vantages. He wanted us to gaze into the welcoming emptiness of the vase. But the

neighbouring glazed ginger jar is seen from lower down, so that Cézanne could emphasise its gratifying roundness.

The plate, by contrast, is raised up steeply on the white cloth, helping us to see the ripe, burnished Provencal apples as enticingly as possible. They spill out onto the patterned drape and seem to

be in danger of pushing the sugar bowl off the table. But Cézanne counters this unrest, and the almost volcanic upheaval of the cloth's mountainous forms, with the coolness of the wall behind.

● *Cézanne is at the Tate Gallery until April 28, sponsored by Ernst & Young. For advance booking, which is advised, telephone 0171-420 0000.*

● Tomorrow: Richard Cork discusses *Woman with a Coffee-pot*, c. 1895

CONCERTS: Berlioz masterpieces; lively Beethoven; a period quartet

ROGER NORRINGTON and the London Philharmonic continue their exploration of Berlioz at the Festival Hall with a programme of shorter works, some heard only rarely today. Norrington, in his introductory chat, described them all as "small masterpieces", which indeed they are, in their way. We were certainly given an overview of Berlioz's development as a composer, from his earliest orchestral piece, the overture *Les Francs-Juges*, to the *Royal Hunt and Storm* scene from Act IV of *Les Troyens*. This set up many fascinating cross-references and insights, though perhaps with a certain lack of the performers' collective concentration.

While there were many

other times when he seemed

so immersed in the unusual

beauty of Berlioz's music that

he appeared strangely indifferent to the audience.

Parts of the excerpt from *Les Troyens* suffered from this patchiness:

the storm climax, with the

antiphonal outburst of "off-

stage" brass and timpani, was

thrilling, but the extended

passage for horns, while beau-

tifully played, was too indulged. This

was generally

quiet. You certainly feel it when the players return, justifiably proud at a hard task well performed. Divisions have been replaced by unity. There is camaraderie, even joy. For just a few moments a game and a changing room have shown what the world might be.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Homage paid in bits and pieces

flashes of genius from Norrington, LPO/Norrington Festival Hall

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KATE BASSETT

the orchestra, giving solos to ophicleides and trombones. emphatic pizzicatos in the double basses and so on. No ophicleides in the London Philharmonic, of course, and the fat sound of modern tubas and trombones lent a ponderous air.

The least familiar item on the programme was the *Fantasy on Shakespeare's The Tempest*, with the role of Spirits of the Air taken by the London Philharmonic Choir and a magical scoring that brilliantly created an atmosphere of enchantment. Much better known today is the song-cycle *La Nuit d'éte*, which was immaculately sung by Ann Murray.

TESS KNIGHTON

CHARLES ROSEN, in his new book *The Romantic Generation*, professes the notion that "the choreographic gyrations of the virtuosic conductor are important to the audience's comprehension", on the grounds that "an accent accompanied by an outlaid arm seems literally to become louder and more intense".

The podium choreography

of Hugh Wolff, conducting the

Philharmonia on Tuesday,

provided a telling demonstration.

The crouching and stalking

were from the Tilson Thomas school of conducting.

But there was also a repertoire

of less histrionic gestures that did signal the conductor's intentions.

The emphatic underlining

of textural details, however, is

considerably less of a virtue in

Sibelius. Wolff's neon sign-

posting in the fifth Symphony

continually foregrounded ma-

terial better left in shadow.

The contours were big and

dramatic, often arresting, but

lacked the veiled, atmospheric

quality that Sibelius surely

wanted. However, if the spirit

remained unconvinced, the

rhetoric was undeniably

stirring.

In Beethoven's Violin Con-

certo those gestures drew our

attention to the textural details: a crisply dotted cadence on trumpets here, a pregnant drum roll there. And all contained within a taut rhythmic framework providing a strong forward thrust (the Philharmonia on top form).

All the more curious, therefore, that the solo part, which would normally be expected to be the more ostentatious, should prove the more reticent.

But this was the reticence of utter self-confidence and mystery. Gil Shaham's playing may seem to be innocently straightforward. But how telling the slightest nuance becomes in that context.

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CHOICE 1
Opera singer Sally Burgess spreads into the jazz field
VENUE: Sunday at the PizzaExpress



CHOICE 2
Wagner comes to English National Opera, with a new staging of *Tristan*
VENUE: Opens tomorrow at the London Coliseum

THE ARTS



CHOICE 3
John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* goes on stage in Edinburgh
VENUE: Opens tonight at the Royal Lyceum



DANCE
Strong stuff from the Royal Ballet: MacMillan revived, and a new work on the subject of AIDS

LONDON
WEEKEND JAZZ: Tonight at the South Bank, Tom Bancroft's free-spirited 14-piece orchestra gathers under its chairman to perform a selection of eclectic material, including a new commission from Birmingham Jazz. (Repeated Sat in Birmingham) Over in Soho on Sunday, the open singer Sally Burgess spreads into her versatile voice at PizzaExpress. (See page 32)

PURCELL ROOM, South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm; Sat (0121-565 6611). Janis Ian, Piccadilly Rooms, Dean Street, W1 (0171-439 8722). Sun, from 7.45pm.

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE Mark Elder returns to English National Opera to conduct a new production of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Alas, he has the time to do little more than pass, with designs by Lin An Inspector Calls), Macbeth, the American Tenor George Sherrill, and Elizabeth Connell (who holds the Sheer Queen for Wagstaffe's Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-832 8000). Tomorrow, 4pm.

INTERNATIONAL SONGMAKERS The Wigmore Hall concert continues. Jim Gough, Steve Davis, Christopher Maltman and pianist Graham Johnson celebrate Alan Berg tonight, and Catherine Wyn-Rogers and Malcolm Martineau take over tomorrow.

CHARTER TWO Tom Conti and Simon Callow continue their unashamed New York whoring towards each other in Neil Simon's comedy

Gleaming, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-730 7300). Now previewing, 8pm, Mon-Thurs, 8pm and Sat, 8pm. Opens Feb 19, 7pm.

COMMUNICATING DOORS: Angela Thorne in Ayckbourn's ingenious time-travel play, fleeing from a vaporous enemy via doors of a hotel that take her forward and back a couple of decades. Savoy, Strand, WC2 (0171-838 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Wed and Sat, 3pm.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE Sam Mendes's radiant production Zoë Wanamaker and Claire Skinner play mother, daughter, Ben Walford is Tom Comedy, Panton Street, SW1 (0171-828 7320). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, Sat, 8pm, Sun, 2pm.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND A new musical revue based on Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (see page 32).

THE MISANTHROPE Martin Crimp's contemporary version of Molière's *The Misanthrope*, with Nicholas Woodeson as the all-knowing Inspector, and Edward Peel and Susan Engel as the pillars of society. Old Vic, Lower Marsh, WC1 (0171-804 9000). Mon-Fri, 7.45pm, Sat, 8pm.

LAUGHING MAD The rubber-faced comedian comes to the West End, Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-454 5049). Mon-Fri, Sat, 8pm; Sun, 6pm.

THE LONG AND THE SHORT AND THE TALL Mark Arden and Bert Kreuk in revival of Willis Hoffs

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

WIGMORE HALL, Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-926 2141). Tonight, 7.30; Sat, 8pm.

ELSEWHERE

EDINBURGH: Opening night for Standard's 20th anniversary of his *Office* at the Minstrel, Tom McGovern and Bob Barner star as the very timid and the simple giant, variably searching for the American Dream in a Depression-bound Scotland. The Traverse, Royal Lyceum, Glenday Street (0131-223 9897). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; Sun, 2.30pm. Until Mar 2.

LEEDS: Toby Jones plays the grumpy cleric and Bob Peck the crusty government doctor in *The Government Inspector*, with Phelim McDermott directing. The Expressions elements are likely to be wacky. Whitechapel Arts Centre, Quay Hill (0113-244 2111). Tomorrow-Feb 14, 7.30pm. Opens Feb 15, 7.30pm. Until Mar 16.

MANCHESTER: Yan Pascal Tortelier and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra start the weekend with the world

premiere of Judith Bingham's *Rehearsed History Beyond Redemption* but if it's a family concert you want then the Hallé Orchestra opens on Sunday afternoon. Ken Campbell (ans can take a peek at Who's There, the Hallé's joint venture with the Royal Ballet) with Toc-Vis Young Free Trade Hall, Peter Street (0161-834 7112). Tonight, 7.30pm. Sun, 3pm. Contact: Oxford Road (01274 44000). Sun, 7.30pm.

BRISTOL: One of Britain's champions of contemporary music, the dressed-up Ensemble, promises Wilf Todd's Violin Concerto. The ensemble always mix in classics from earlier in the century, so the programme also includes works by Bernstein, Payne and Copland.

LONDON GALLERIES: Daughter-Creator of the Ballet Russes (0171-638 4141). British Museum: Olivo and Kyoto paintings (0171-638 1558).

COLLECTOR: With Phelim McDermott, *The Sculptured Legacy* (1675-1930) the NG in World War I (0171-747 2865).

NATIONAL PORTRAIT: *George Washington and His Servants* (Jan Steen) (0171-887 8000). Tate Ceramic (0171-887 8000). V & A: *Jan An Frans* (0171-938 8500).

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Isaacs' assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only

■ Some seats available

■ Seats at all prices

0171-302 8800. Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; Mat Wed and Sat, 3pm.

■ AN INSPECTOR CALLS: Stephen Daldry's powerful production, with Nicholas Woodeson as the all-knowing Inspector, and Edward Peel and Susan Engel as the pillars of society. Old Vic, Lower Marsh, WC1 (0171-804 9000). Mon-Fri, 7.45pm; Sat, 8pm.

■ LESE EVANS: The rubber-faced comedian comes to the West End, Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-454 5049). Mon-Fri, Sat, 8pm; Sun, 6pm.

■ THE MISANTHROPE: Martin Crimp's contemporary version of Molière's *The Misanthrope*, with Nicholas Woodeson as the all-knowing Inspector, and Edward Peel and Elizabeth Williams (0171-804 9000). Mon-Fri, 7.45pm; Sat, 8pm.

■ SLAUGHTERHOUSE: Naomi Wallace's play savages, surreal and set in a slaughter house. Essentially a dark and abhorrent condition, confusing but vivid. Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-838 8891). Tonight-Tue, 7.30pm; Mat, 1.30pm and 7pm. In rep.

■ SWEEP PANIC: Saskia Reeves plays a troubled mother stabbing a child in a fit of rage in *Sweep Panic* in Stephen Poliakoff's production of *The Girl in Today's London*.

■ VALLEY SONG: Alphie Sugden plays a grumpy miner in his latest play, with Eddie Marsan as the girl daydreaming of life in the city. Royal Court, Soho Square (0171-730 1459). Mon-Sat, 7.30; Sat, 3pm.

■ TICKET INFORMATION: Supplied by Society of London Theatre.

■ HEAT (16): LA detective Al Pacino leads to Robert De Niro's crooks. Exposed by a former film writer, Michael Mann (0171-838 8891).

Clapham Picture House (0171-498 2705); Metro: Finsbury Road (0171-270 6200); Picturehouse (0171-337 0000); Nestor Hill Cinema (0171-272 6705); Odessa Studios College (0171-914 0689); Ritzy (0171-737 2121).

Screenarama (0171-933 2722); Screenplay (0171-933 1527).

■ LES MISÉRABLES (12): Unruly variation on Victor Hugo's novel from Clodagh Lethbridge (0171-332 0000); Warner (0171-752 3322); Warner (0171-427 4343).

RENDRE-VOUS IN PARIS (PG): Three tales of love and chance. Featherweight delight from Eric Rohmer, with a youthful cast of unknowns. BFI (0171-325 4222); Renoir (0171-837 5442).

■ CURRENT: *FATHER OF THE BRIDE PART II* (PG): Steve Martin faces the father of his son. Bill Murray plays with Diane Keaton and Kimberly Williams. Director: Charles Shyer (0171-804 9000).

■ THE LONG AND THE SHORT AND THE TALL: Mark Arden and Bert Kreuk in revival of *Willie Half*

before him, prepared to confront the darker side of human sexual psychology. But, unlike Tudor, he was turning those forbidden passions into gloriously effusive dance. When they come — for this baller is more padding than an over-stuffed Victorian sofa — MacMillan's dance phrases are charged with expressive urgency, hurling his dancers into flights of ecstasy and anguish.

Sex is in the air in *The Invitation*: it's even to be found in the naked statues in Nicholas Georgiadis's garden, and all the genteel Edwardian house guests are at it. The Girl (the role that made a star of Lynn Seymour) and Her Cousin are two innocents in their midst, folding into one another in youthful infatuation. In stark contrast, the Wife and the Husband are destroying one another with their anger and distillation. The Wife's rather touching seduction of the Cousin is set against the Husband's brutal rape of the Girl, a moment of true expressional horror.

The Royal Ballet dances it well, even though the work hasn't been done since 1977. Genesis Rosato, as the Wife, was elegant and sympathetic; Stuart Cassidy's Cousin was sensitively realised; Irik Mukhametov was powerfully masculine as the husband overtaken by his carnal appetite. And Leanne Benjamin, inheriting the Seymour role,

danced as if she were caught up in a rush of adrenaline, the physicality of her performance spilling forth like floodwaters out of a burst dam — elemental and unstoppable.

Sex is also a force of destruction in *Dances with Death*, Matthew Harris' new piece about AIDS. A baller about such a loaded issue, especially one whose pivotal character is the virus itself, could so easily descend into an embarrassment of mawkish inappropriateness. But Hart, although only 23, has learnt the lessons of his craft and moving personal statement delivered with touches of theatrical brilliance.

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side of

With hopes high in Hounslow

NEW ALBUMS: The Bluetones take to the sky, Michael Jackson's nephews don't. Both will sell millions, says David Sinclair

THE BLUETONES

Expecting To Fly
(Superior Quality)

RECORDINGS/A&M BLUE 004
DESPITE the unsteady scramble by the latest wave of groups to dissociate themselves from the now rather dog-eared Britpop tag, the bandwagon rolls merrily onwards. And if the Bluetones are not an example of a new British band playing fine pop music, then it is hard to think who is.

Four earnest young men from Hounslow who have already been declared the great pale hopes of 1996 on the basis of a handful of singles, they offer plenty of passion, though nothing in the way of innovation. Sticking primarily to a retro formula of guitars, drums and voices, their debut album, *Expecting To Fly*, has a comfortably familiar sound which will do nothing to hinder its potentially massive commercial appeal.

On songs such as *Things Change* and *Time & Again*, Adam Devlin's guitar-playing encompasses the chiming grace of Johnny Marr and the choppy aggression of Pete Townshend, while singer Mark Morris plies his tales of romantic whimsy with a clean-cut voice making a pleasing virtue out of his drawn-out, southern-English vowel sounds.

Disillusionment is a recurring theme - "I'm not the same person I was a year ago/You cut me deeply and the scars still show" - but, typically, it is music that turns a downcast mood into something life-affirming and wholly uplifting.

The Bluetones' fondness for pop melody, and the care with which the songs are written and arranged, means that they stray, at times, a little too close to the bland "tunesmithery" of the Beautiful South. But the harder numbers, such as the ambitious *Talking To Clary* and *Cut Some Rug* (imagine the Stone Roses with a proper singer), there is a rare brilliance at work.

3T
Brotherhood
(MJ Music/Epic 481694)

BROTHERS Taj (22), Taryll (20) and TJ Jackson (17) are the three Ts in 3T. Their Dad is Tim Jackson, formerly of the Jackson Five/Jacksons, which means that their uncle is none other than the King of Pop himself. Membership of a showbusiness dynasty undoubtedly has its advantages. Not only are the boys - none of whom looks a day over 15 - signed to Michael Jackson's MJJ label, but he has also contributed a new song, *Why*, to their album, *Brotherhood*.

However, the intensity of the grooming process, which effectively began at birth, and the burden of expectation which now rests on their slender shoulders is such that any spark of youthful innocence or spontaneity has been rigorously excised from this debut.

The result is a sophisticated but stodgy collection of mature soul ballads and mellow swingbeat grooves that have been polished to dull perfection. Uncle Michael sings with the boys on *Why*, an insipid, orchestrated ballad that addresses such big questions as "Why does Wednesday come after Tuesday?", and his involvement alone will guarantee that this album will be a substantial hit.

However, their instinctive tendency to play safe means that despite their obvious talent, the Ts sound as if they have been catapulted into an early middle-age.

THE SAW DOCTORS
Same Old Town
(Sharmont Records/Pinnacle SAWDOC 004)

IMMUNE to the winds of change that constantly raze the pop landscape, the Saw Doctors continue to peddle their emerald brand of folk rock with subtle goodwill on their third album, *Same Old Town*. Songs ranging from the jolly *Macnas Parade* to the lifting *Clare Island* are peppered with the usual Irish landmarks, while the romantic refrain of "Why don't we share the darkness tonight?" is greeted (if only in the sleeve notes) with the riposte "Guinness or Murphy?"

Musically it is a rugged, if rather guileless formula - like Bono in wellingtons, as guitarist and singer Leo Moran memorably said - but there is a simple truth at the heart of songs such as *To Win Just Once* and the recent hit, *World Of Good*, that makes them strangely impervious to criticism.

As they put it themselves, "Life's too short for wasting/For ifs and might-have-beens," and *Same Old Town* is an album that demands to be savoured on its own terms, unhindered by the ifs and buts of fashion, timing or taste.

STATUS QUO
Don't Stop
(Polygram TV 531 035)

IF EVER there was an argument for forcing the compulsory retirement of rock bands this is it. To celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of a partnership that was forged, appropriately, at a Budin's holiday camp, Francis Rossi and Rick Parfitt have hit on the idea of putting a selection of other people's songs, some of them perfectly good to begin with, through the Status Quo grinder.

Performed with a cavalier disregard for nuance and a deadening lack of conviction, the ominously titled *Don't Stop* is a farrago of epic proportions. *Proud Mary*, *Get Back*, *Lucille*, *Sorrow*, *Raining In My Heart* and, of course, Fleetwood Mac's presidential campaign song

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Little fluffy clouds: the Bluetones, great white hopes of 1996, head for the heights on their debut album

Don't Stop are just some of the old chestnuts that get a roasting.

Torpedoed by lacklustre vocals and the Quo's notoriously arthritic rhythm section, even the Move's rabbble-rousing *I Can Hear the Grass Grow* and Robert Palmer's haunting *Johnny and Mary* will like delicate blooms in the sun, while a collaboration with the Beach Boys on a version of their surfing classic *Fun Fun Fun* is nothing short of tragic. Don't stop? If only they would.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 (*What's the Story*) Morning Glory? ... Oasis (Creation)
- 2 Jagged Little Pill ... Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
- 3 The Bends ... Radiohead (Parlophone)
- 4 Different Class ... Pulp (Island)
- 5 Bizarre Fruit/Bizarre Fruit II ... M People (Deconstruction)
- 6 All Change ... Cast (Polydor)
- 7 Deliverance ... Baby D (Systematic)
- 8 B.P.M. — The Very Best of ... The Beat (Go Feet)
- 9 HiStory ... Michael Jackson (Epic)
- 10 Robson & Jerome ... Robson & Jerome (RCA)

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Reaching back to the prehis-

■ POP 1
Chips off a famous old block: 3T are a trio of Jackson offspring - and don't mind who knows

■ POP 2

Simple truths, with an Irish accent, come on the latest tracks from the Saw Doctors

THE TIMES POP ARTS



■ POP 3

"The voice of a girl, the body of a Gladiator": who can resist the special charm of Audioweb?

■ POP 4

Gravity-defying Cleo brings a touch of the old magic to a season at the Café Royal



CONCERTS

Perfect dentistry with added bite

Nick Heyward
Dingwalls, NW1

THESE days, it is widely held that the owner of the most boyish grin in British pop is Blur's Damon Albarn. Back in the early 1980s, though, that mannequin was cast around a young Nick Heyward's shoulders. While many musical contemporaries were experimenting with the frilled collars and extravagant fringes of New Romanticism, the relative wit and drive of his punk-pop band Haircut 100 came as a breath of fresh air.

Their collective career was short-lived, however, and Heyward's subsequent progress as a solo artist has been hampered by the difficulties of persuading a listening public that a man first cherished for his pleasing dentistry can yet mature into a songwriter of genuine worth.

The penny might be beginning to drop that *Tangled*, his recent album for Epic, has won warm reviews, going some way to repositioning the 34-year-old artist within the collective consciousness.

Driven by a much more muscular guitar sound than that which characterised his earlier work, its sharp songs have led some critics to comment that Heyward should be viewed almost as an older brother to the brash young heroes of Britpop. His acute lyrical eye provides the strongest support for such a

theory: maturity has further ripened his ability to evoke intensely English scenes through the clever use of a telling word or phrase, so that now social comment occurs where whimsicality previously reigned.

This one-off London appearance, coming towards the end of a 14-date tour, found Heyward deplored his grin far more sparingly than before and instead thrashing out those new songs (*She's Another Girl*, *London*, *Carry On Loving*, the recent modest hit *The World*) with relative aggression. Visits to his back catalogue were few and far between: 1983's *Blue Hat for a Blue Day* was scarcely recognisable in its new, swaggering incarnation, though the Haircut's *Fantastic Day* from a year earlier still managed to project its original charm.

An obvious determination to carve out a new musical direction is to be applauded, however. If Albarn is still writing with Heyward's current energy in 15 years' time, he really will have something to smile about.

ALAN JACKSON

Vocal acrobat

Cleo Laine
Café Royal

HISTORIC era of W.C. Handy, Dankworth put a contemporary, funky spin on *St Louis Blues*. The wayfaring lyrics of *I Thought About You* were complemented by Malcolm Greene's insistent bass lines and Mike Bradley's train-like drum motifs. Given her range, Laine is the perfect choice to perform *Creole Love Call*, her tribute to Adelaide Hall, embellished in this reading by exceptional if rarely heard lyrics concocted by Lorraine Feather.

The evening sagged only in the extended medley dedicated to Vincent Youmans. There was nothing wrong with the songs themselves, but the fragmented, stop-go treatment served to underline Laine's occasional habit of treating lyrics as mere playthings. Then again, her sly sense of mischief allowed her to extract the last ounce of satire from the glorious *Peel Me a Grape*, written by Dave Frishberg and popularised by Blossom Dearie. Frishberg's deft evocation of ennui among the up-town socialites sounds even more timely in this age of the princess, the gym and the shopping expedition.

CLIVE DAVIS

Back to the great daze of variety

Caitlin Moran arm-wrestles with the hefty promise of Audioweb's eclectic sonic attack

Feel that? An arm like a tree-trunk is extended across the table. Under the skin, muscles wriggle about like restless children under a duvet. It's certainly some arm. Most of us make do with a percentage of this arm. Parts of it appear to be in different time-zones.

"And I don't do *nothing*," Martin says, divinely gifted singer, giggles. "I don't pick up nothing heavier than a pint. It's God's joke: he gave me the voice of a girl and the body of a Gladiator."

Unfortunately, Martin cannot extend himself to describing Audioweb's music so succinctly. This is not surprising, as Audioweb, like Heinz, come in 57 different varieties. Imagine Jah Wobble on bass, the Edge on guitar and this Jelal and Hyde figure up front, alternating between the blissful purity of McAlmont at his most lovelorn and Shabba Ranks chattering away nineteen to the dozen.

Audioweb are a miracle-shock when you see them live for the first time. There's a real feeling that you're wit-

nessing an Event that you can bore your children to death in years to come. But the furrow Audioweb plough is a fraught one.

"It is shocking how difficult it is getting press with a black guy in the band," Martin growls. "We were supposed to be getting a feature in one of the music magazines, but they pulled it because they were doing Black Grape the same week, and they said that the readers would get confused if they had two bands with black members in the same issue."

Martin's record collection reflects what seems like every trend over the past 20 years. "I started off on reggae, went into ska 'cos I liked the way it was stripped down, angular. Then I had me soul phase... not too much, y'know? A bit of a dabble." He giggles again. "And then I had me indie. A large part of my house is devoted to the Smiths, Sixties stuff... Beatles, Stones, Hollies, Jefferson Airplane. And Paul Jones. He's a bit of a hero."

"But I can't stand much of

what's happening now — it all sounds the same. I turn on the radio and I don't know if it's the Stone Roses or the Bluetones." I think that's what Alan Bluetone was striving for.

"All the Britpop stuff is rubbish," Martin bellows. "I know all their references, and they're not doing much with them. The only single in the past year and a half that made me sit up was Reverend Black Grape. Then I bought the album, and that was boring."

"They really wimped out. That album should have been

a rhythmic punch in the face. It was just this thing you could tap your feet to. If you were really drunk." Having dismissed most of his peers, Martin turns to those he supports.

"Supergrass are brilliant," he says. "We did Jools Holland's New Year's Eve show with them, and they were lovely. I saw Danny walking down the street a couple of weeks ago, holding this pair of trousers. He'd just come out of Top Shop and was going into Marks & Spencer.

I asked him what he was doing, and he said, 'I've just

found these trousers in the street, and I'm taking them back to all the shops to see if I can get a refund.' Fretend they were a present!"

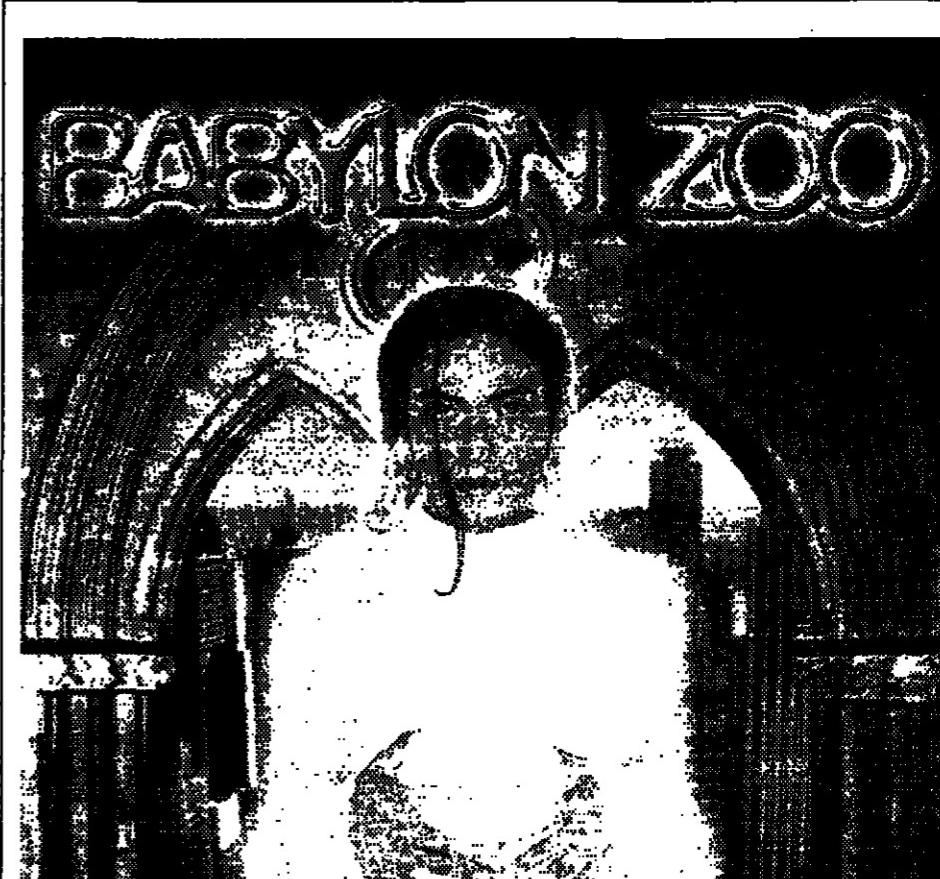
Martin lets out a huge guffaw. "I started to get worried — if Supergrass need to go around selling trousers after having a No 1 album, it's going to take us years before we can afford to get a round."

With which he lifts his pint and pumps those spectacular muscles a little bit more.

• Audioweb's single, Yeah, is released on Monday by Mother Records



Audioweb, with Martin on the right — "the voice of a girl, the body of a Gladiator"



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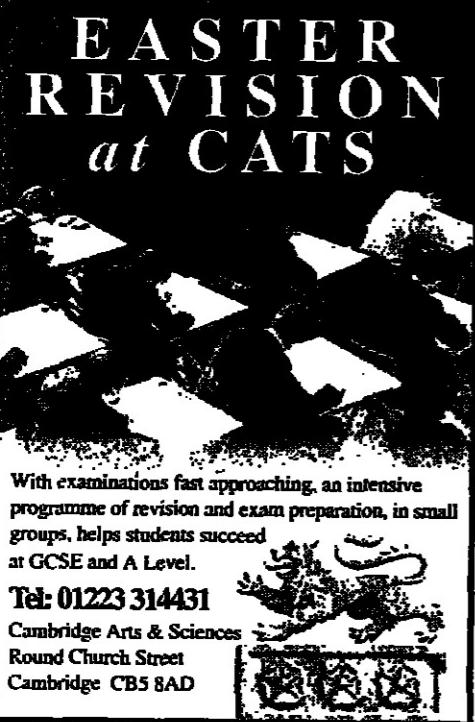
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EDUCATION

Will the heads play Labour's tune?

Tony Evans looks at the strategic options for independent schools

Whether the general election occurs this year or next, it is already clear that each political party sees education as a central issue in its manifesto. Indeed, it seems likely to play a more important role than in any election for more than 30 years and it is no surprise that parties now propose initiatives such as "fast-tracking" with greater frequency than coherence.

Independent schools are intensely sensitive to this rash of conflicting proposals but it can no longer be assumed that such schools represent, as they did in the past, a safe Tory constituency. The past ten years have been characterised by a series of pragmatic accretions in educational policy, rather than by structural consistency, and those committed to the values of independent schools may well consider all politicians' rhetoric with unprecedented scepticism in the months ahead.

In this they will not be alone, for they share many of the concerns of governors, parents and staff in the maintained sector. Yet independent schools have specific preoccupations against which they will judge the plethora of political intentions.

What might these preoccupations be and how might independent schools react? It may seem a truism that independent schools value above all their independence, as do the parents of their pupils. At all costs that principle will be defended in at least five domains.

First, there is resentment of increasingly intrusive bureaucracy. This has been appreciable and few heads would affirm that it has helped to improve standards. The



A music lesson at King Edward VI High School for Girls, Birmingham. Schools such as this will fight to retain their independence from political intrusion

independent school thrives only if its critical parent body approves of its ethos and provision. It is therefore vital that heads and governors have the freedom to develop their schools in ways which they believe help pupils to succeed.

Intrusive bureaucracy erodes independence, as epitomised by the misguided format of the Department for Education's examination statistics, which distort and undervalue achievement or the rigid requirements on registration, which give no credence to the local intelligence of responsible heads.

Secondly, independent schools will look hard at any threat of curricular erosion or dogmatism.

Will a future Labour government require independent schools to observe the national curriculum in its every detail and at each key stage? Will testing be imposed? Will it modify, in the wake of the imminent Dearing proposals, or Labour's plans, a national 14-19 provision in ways with which independent schools can be at ease?

Over recent years independent schools have been vindicated in resisting inchoate or precipitous

curricular change they mainly welcomed the principle of a national curriculum but gave warning against the complex folly with which it was implemented some five years ago.

The defence of separate sciences, of classics, of English literature, concern for standards in mathematics and modern languages, opposition to modish cross-curricular themes and reservations about elaborate testing have underlined the salutary vision of independent schools. They will not compromise their academic values and freedom.

They would be unwise to barter such freedom against even assisted places, their third area of concern.

The assisted places scheme, often accused of elitism, is in the social sense the exact opposite. Should a Labour government abolish the scheme or phase it out, as it is committed to do, most schools offering assisted places will remain comfortably viable. Some may choose to decrease in size but, ironically, social division will be increased, not reduced.

That will sadden independent schools, all of which seek to widen opportunity and access. Even at this stage they hope a Labour government would seek to draw strength from independent schools and devise an alternative scheme in partnership which reconciles their independence with a range of admissions across the social spectrum on the basis of need.

The experience, academic and extracurricular diversity and proven quality of so many independent schools could be used imaginatively by a Labour government. This could profitably extend to boarding schools and is already reflected in

the steadily increasing number of places taken by local education authorities whose own schools cannot meet the full range of children's needs.

Fourthly, independent schools will defend resolutely their charitable status. Schools have interpreted their charitable purposes generously through bursaries, support to local communities, to the young, underprivileged, and disabled through provision of sporting, musical and theatrical facilities, teacher training courses and, not least, their provision of educated, disciplined citizens.

Two thirds of independent schools report the use of facilities by community groups and nearly a quarter by maintained schools. Were charitable status removed, fees would rise but the effect, particularly in the urban day schools, would be to narrow the social base of the intake precisely where it should be enlarged. Education is a charitable activity *per se*. Why should a Labour government not extend charitable status to all schools?

A fifth area of concern lies with the independent inspection scheme. HMC and GSA have devised systems of inspection which are demanding and which seek to ensure that schools of the highest proven quality are further, and continuously, improved.

In this domain the Labour Party is wise to acknowledge the strengths of independent inspections accredited by Ofsted. Independent schools would not lightly surrender their stringent and appropriate system.

Independent schools are an integral part of education. They do not wish to be an enclave of privilege but to contribute to national prosperity. They seek co-operation not confrontation with government. In the five areas of concern outlined there is ample scope for respect, progress and positive partnership.

• The author is Headmaster of Portsmouth Grammar School and chairman of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference.

Susan Elkin finds that good primary schools exist outside Ofsted's roll of honour; Mary Ann Sieghart can't wait for the test results

Cecil Road, a highway to understanding

Cecil Road County Primary School is a huge former board school built in 1909 and tucked tightly into narrow, car-lined backstreets in Gravesend, Kent. It is oversubscribed and of its 400 children about 40 per cent, predominantly Sikhs, are bilingual.

Several things strike the visitor immediately. Plants in tubs bloom on the edges of the steps to the entrance. Posted on the door are several notices stressing partnership and parental involvement. Strains of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony are audible in the distance. Otherwise, it is very quiet. Beautiful examples of children's art hang everywhere.

You begin to sense something special even before you see a pupil. As pairs of tiny children, all neatly uniformed, come to the secretary, on errands or with messages, your first impression is confirmed.

The present school was formed in 1989 from the merger of three separate schools. The former junior, infant and nursery had only 200 children on roll between them. Andy Sparks, the head, says: "My motto is that you have to get the best out of what you've got. I believe in thinking positively. Take our cricket team. We haven't even got a pitch. We practise in the playground and our boys have just won a championship for the fourth consecutive year."

"And I don't complain about

money," Mr Sparks adds. "I was an accountant before I came into education and I know how to get the best out of resources."

Classes are impressively orderly. Every child I met was purposefully getting on with something. Two were having a violin lesson. Another group was being taught music sitting on the floor around the teacher, the pupils concentrating intently.

A class of six-year-olds were all in their places working quietly. Even the nursery class was playing outside in an unusually disciplined and structured way. "I believe discipline is vital," Mr Sparks says. "Without it there is no learning environment."

Kamal Cox works with bilingual children to develop their English language skills. She also visits parents at home and provides an informal interpretation/translation service. "I have never heard anyone mention racial difference in this school except in a positive, celebratory way," Mrs Cox says.

It is for the management of its rich cultural diversity that the school is most remarkable. There are two ways of approaching racial integration. You can either make a complicated and self-defeating business of positive discrimination measures, or you can simply be natural and build real lasting equality—as Cecil Road does.



A lesson in tolerance: the children of Cecil Road

Doreen Deakin, the grandmother of a pupil, says: "In this school everyone is welcome and everyone is important. The school is part of the community and the community is part of the school. It has changed local attitudes to racial diversity."

Mrs Deakin believes the school "doesn't receive the accolades it deserves for what it does". Earlier this year the school was nominated for a national Citizenship Award for Celebrating Diversity. Out of 170 schools, Cecil Road was shortlisted to the last three, along with a Yorkshire grammar school and a Manchester high school.

There is an obvious partnership between children, parents, headmaster, teachers, parents, governors and the local community.

Laura Joyce, nine, has the last word: "The really good thing about this school is that we've got all sorts of different people. There are Irish, English, and lots from other countries and they all get on well together."

Manchester to receive the award, he believes it was a fitting end to his first five years at Cecil Road.

It is encouraging in these days when we are told so often of racial "incidents" and tensions to hear Mrs Deakin say:

"The children celebrate Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Chinese new year and Jewish festivals. They are taught to understand each other's cultures."

There is an obvious partnership between children, parents, headmaster, teachers, parents, governors and the local community.

Laura Joyce, nine, has the last word: "The really good thing about this school is that we've got all sorts of different people. There are Irish, English, and lots from other countries and they all get on well together."

At one school, we had the opportunity of a full interview with the headmaster, in which he patiently answered a myriad of questions. In another, the headmistress could be collared only during a parents' tour, as she showed us and ten other prospective parents around. At the third, we had a brief chat with the headmaster in the company of many other parents before two children showed us round.

So then I tried ringing a couple of the better secondary schools in the area to ask which feeder schools they

had. In that case, was it a responsible use of statistics to pass judgment previously on an entire age group on the basis of so few inspections? And how small was the sample in previous years?

The demand for statistics is now such that perfectly valid judgments are taken seriously only if they have a figure attached. Mr Woodhead is in an unrivalled position to tell whether standards are satisfactory in English schools. His verdict must be taken

seriously, but what is the quality threshold that half of primary schools and two fifths of secondaries fail to meet? How do schools know which half they are in?

The dominance of statistics has obvious dangers, well illustrated by the counter-intuitive measures Mr Woodhead chose to omit from this week's report. Once they give the wrong message, the only option is to find another statistic.

The annual charade over GCSE and A-level results is another example, when falling pass rates are taken to mean failure but improvement automatically means lower examination standards.

Judging educational performance is notoriously difficult and often subjective. Perhaps we should accept that and take inspectors' word for it if they find that standards are slipping.

Lies, damned lies and education statistics

We should take the inspectors' word for it if they find that standards are slipping, not rely on figures, says John O'Leary

Throughout the 1990s, Chief Inspectors of Schools have reported that one lesson in three was badly taught in English schools. Tony Blair even used the statistic (wrongly) when he launched Labour's latest education policy.

This year, the figure was mysteriously absent from the Chris Woodhead's annual report. Instead, we were told that half of primary schools and two fifths of secondaries needed to improve.

Why the change of measure? Presumably because the proportion of poor lessons is now 20 per cent, an apparent improvement at a time when concern over standards has seldom been higher.

The biggest change is in the four years of Key Stage 2, from seven to 11. By common consent the area of the curriculum that arouses greatest

concern, last year 30 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory; this year it is down to 21 per cent.

Unless there has been dramatic improvement which Mr Woodhead is ignoring, the only possible explanation are that earlier estimates were exaggerated, or Ofsted inspectors are more easily satisfied than Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Last month's test results hardly support the improvement theory, but even they have their critics. Education officers in Hampshire have discovered that up to 1,000 low-achievers, who took easier tests as well as those for pupils of higher ability, have been counted twice. The

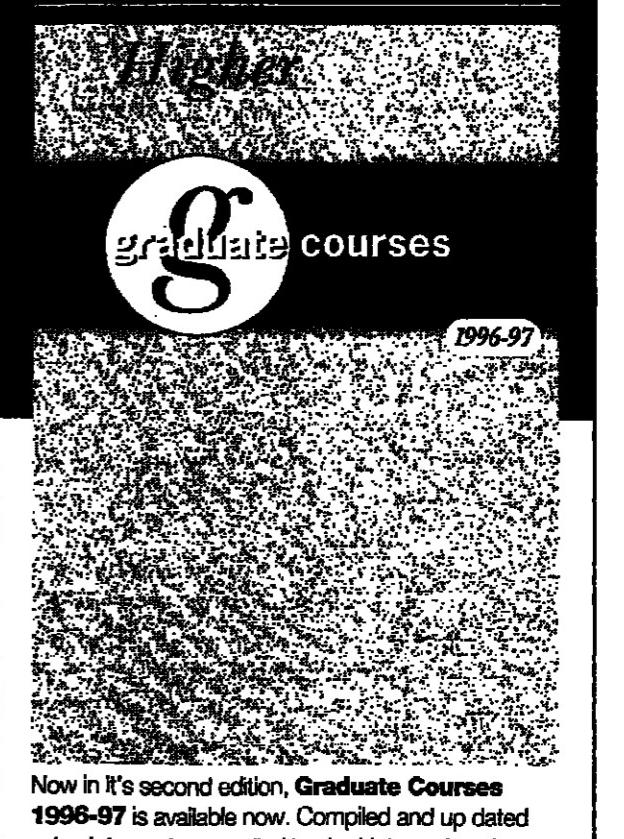
result, which is likely to be repeated nationally, is that mathematics and science scores for the county were underestimated by 2 per cent.

The science results already stood out: while fewer than half of 11-year-olds reached their expected level in English and mathematics, in science, the subject said to pose most problems for primary teachers, the "pass rate" was 70 per cent. The obvious conclusion is that if all the tests had been set at the same standard as science we would have been celebrating a success story, not criticising primary schools.

Ofsted's explanation for the apparent improvement at Key Stage 2 is the

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Crystal Palace keep Lewington Bassett leaps back on managerial merry-go-round

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

DAVE BASSETT gladly accepted one of the most precarious jobs in football — the management of Crystal Palace yesterday. He renews his acquaintance with Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, whose vigorous, hands-on approach has so often led to conflict with employees.

Bassett, 51, first laid out his ground rules before agreeing a 2½-year contract at the Endsleigh Insurance League first division club. "I'm no puppet for anyone," he said. "Ron is an outspoken chairman and I'm sure we will have our disagreements, but I said to him that if he wants me to manage the club, he should let me get one with it. I wouldn't be here if I thought I wouldn't be allowed to do the job."

Steve Coppell, the technical director, and Ray Lewington and Peter Nicholas, the first-



Bassett: ground rules

team coaches, will continue at Selhurst Park. "I was keen that there should be no casualties when I came here," Bassett said. "Although I have some sympathy for Ray and Peter over what has happened, they have been doing good jobs and I'm sure they'll carry on doing so."

Cold weather wreaks havoc with FA Cup

By PETER BALL

THE snow may have been disappearing in many areas across the country yesterday, but it has already taken a heavy toll on the FA Cup. At the moment, next Saturday, the official date for the fifth round, is sure of only one tie; at most, it will have three out of the six scheduled.

"On Monday, five days before the start of the fifth round, we will still be without one conclusive tie," Steve Double, the Football Association press officer, said yesterday. "We really need the games at Swindon and Ipswich on Monday and Tuesday to be finished at the first attempt." The winners then would have home ties on February 17, joining Huddersfield Town, who will entertain Middlesbrough or Wimbledon on that day in the one tie that is on.

However, even if Swindon Town or Oldham Athletic, Ipswich Town or Walsall come through at the first attempt, the postponements

on Tuesday and the batch of draws on Wednesday evening mean that the fourth round will certainly not be completed before February 18, at the earliest. If Shrewsbury Town and Liverpool draw on that day, it would stretch until February 28, leaving the possibility that the fifth round could even extend until March 16, a week after the sixth round is due to be played.

Snow is not the only cause of disruption. The greater notice that police require and their increased input into the choice of dates are also significant.

Yesterday, for example, Leeds United were unhappy at the West Yorkshire Police's decision to demand a noon kick-off for the second leg of their Coca-Cola Cup semi-final against Birmingham City on February 25, which could cost both clubs £100,000 in television fees if ITV is unable to show the match originally to be played at 4pm at the new time.

RESCHEDULED FA CUP TIES

Monday, Feb 12	Aston Villa (3-0); Swindon Town or Oldham Athletic (7-45). Replay (if required): Sat Feb 17 (3-0).
Tuesday, Feb 13	Fourth round: Ipswich v Walsall (7-45). Replay (if required): Sat Feb 17 (3-0).
Fourth round replay: Crewe Alexandra v Southampton (7-30); Oxford United v Middlesbrough (7-45); Wimborne v Macclesfield (7-45).	
Wednesday, Feb 14	Fourth round: Bolton v Leeds (7-45). Replay (if required): West Feb 21 (7-45).
Fourth round replay: Grimsby Town v West Ham United (7-45); Manchester City v Coventry City (7-45); Port Vale v Everton (7-45).	
Saturday, Feb 18	Fifth round: Shrewsbury Town or Liverpool v Charlton Athletic.

Scattergun approach benefits world rugby

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

FOR years, rugby union has tended to cast a cloak of secrecy around the amounts of money available for the sport's development in a global sense. Yesterday, however, the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) declared its financial hand.

From the profits of the past two World Cups, some £7.4 million has either been distributed to, or is earmarked for, nearly 50 countries. Moreover, the International Rugby Settlement, established in the Isle of Man in 1990, has funds amounting to £10 million — a pot that is still growing — for fostering the game worldwide.

"I see this as day one of the development of rugby union," Keith Rowlands, the retiring IRFB secretary, said in introducing Lee Smith, the board's first development and resource officer. It will be the function of Smith, 48, who was New Zealand's director of coaching and development, to monitor and advise on requests for grant aid.

"The litmus-paper test of how successful our system is will be seen after another two World Cups," Smith said. "When we can go into a tournament expecting a series of close games, then we will have an indication of rugby's growing maturity."

Some of the scorelines from the 1995 World Cup — 145 points scored by New Zealand against Japan, 89 by Scotland against the Ivory Coast —

Lewington, however, still felt miffed. "I do feel a bit slighted by this," he said. "I was picking the team, but I did have a few ups and downs with Ron. I wanted the final decision on the team and tactics, but he didn't feel that was the way to go. Peter and myself have got nothing to be ashamed of. We can hold our heads high and we've just got to get on with it."

Bassett has masterminded six promotion-winning campaigns with Wimbledon, where he first worked with Noades, and Sheffield United. He also holds the Football League record for the briefest managerial tenure — three days — when he joined Palace in 1984 before changing his mind and returning to Wimbledon.

"I was a bit younger then and it seemed a good idea at the time," he said. "I soon realised I made the wrong decision." With Lewington falling out with Noades in public over team selection policy and Bassett still available after leaving Sheffield United by mutual consent in December, a change in Palace's backroom staff was always likely. That it involved an addition, rather than a replacement, was the only surprise.

More strange was a lengthy statement issued by the club, that continually stressed its commitment to "playing good football". Bassett, throughout his 16-year managerial career, has usually been associated with the up-and-at-em, long-ball version of the beautiful game.

"I'm very conscious of being typecast like that; it sometimes irks me and irritates me," he said. "Football fashions and trends change and of course I would like to play eye-catching stuff, but you have to play in a style that best suits the players you've got. At the end of the day, it's all about winning. It's no good playing attractive football and then getting relegated, is it?"

Lewington will select the side for the last time tomorrow, when Palace play at home to Sheffield United, before Bassett takes control. He was twice interviewed for the vacant Ireland job, but, after hearing nothing except that Mick McCarthy had been appointed, he pursued other options.

McCarthy's successor at Millwall was confirmed yesterday as Jimmy Nicholl, the Raith Rovers manager. Nicholl, 38, the former Northern Ireland and Manchester United defender, will take with him Martin Harvey, his assistant, at Stark's Park.

"I'm going to a new club and, within four months, we could be in the Premiership," Nicholl said. "Normally when you take over, the club is in a bit of a mess, but all Millwall need is a bit of fine tuning."

Not that long ago, the very

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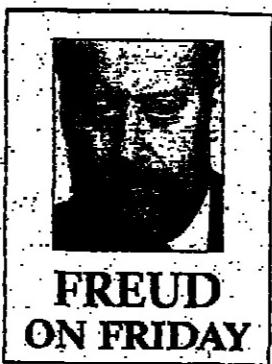
Students of sport abounding in land of the springbok

A. S. NEILL, founder and then headmaster of Summerhill School, said that, as none of his pupils had gone on to become Members of Parliament, he must have got it about right.

At Hilton College, near Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, I asked the second master how many Hiltonians had attained international status in sport and he sent for the marketing manager who gave me the list: 15 cricketers, including McLean, Procter, Crookes; eight rugby players — P.G.A. Johnstone, G Teichmann; 13 polo internationals, ten hockeyists, two garsmen, canoers, golfers and tennis players and a dozen representatives of assorted disciplines from hot-air ballooning to rifle shooting.

"You must have got it about right," I suggested to Gordon Crossley, who, when teaching at Gresham's Holt, in the late 1960s, scored 103 against Wisbech. Crossley said that the school was best known for its academic achievements, but then he would say that. R.J.O. Meyer used to say it about Millfield.

Last week, when the nat-



**FREUD
ON FRIDAY**

ional football team won the African Nations Cup, an excited radio commentator shouted: "We have arrived: look out world."

Bafana Bafana's (the boys') success, at football followed the lifting of rugby's World Cup. Test series victory against England and there are bullish noises coming out in respect of South Africa's Davis Cup tennis chances.

It seemed a good idea to examine the infrastructure. You turn off the N3 about 50 miles north of Durban at the Hilton exit. The sign shows Hilton to the right, Hilton College left and I turned left and drove and

drove along a handsomely tarmacked road by the Umgeni river through stunning countryside, past forests of yellow-wood and pine. That is the school drive; seven kilometres on, you reach the school gate.

Hilton was founded as a school for 50 children by an Anglican minister in 1872 and the founding fathers had the wisdom to buy up land ... 3,500 acres. Today, there are 500 male pupils, about 10 per cent non-white. I arrived during central hour: 1.45-2.45, when boys can do whatever they like but not games. "If we lost prohibition, they'd all be out there playing touch rugby and cricket," I was told, and by 3pm it was all better.

By the entrance, beyond the slave bell, a boy was playing the one-hole golf course. Two sets of six cricket nets were fully occupied with three bowlers per batsman. There were four practice games. You could tell because the boys wore white shorts; longs are reserved for matches.

The pool was filled with boys swimming and girls diving; athletes ran along the drive and around the hal-



Hilton College, the South African school renowned for sporting achievement

loured turf of the school's rugby ground, where crowds of 7,000-8,000 came when Hilton play against their arch-rivals, Michaelhouse. Coaches shuttled boys to the river for rowing and canoeing, to the lake for sailing. In the gymnasium above the three full-size basketball courts, a couple of dozen boys were using state-of-the-art machines, with that

many again busy at the hoops. There is an indoor squash net in the corner. Squash is hugely popular. Hilton play in a summer squash league and the place abounds with tennis courts.

As this is the cricket season and the eyes of South Africans are on Hansie Cronje and his men on the sub-continent, I asked how many of the boys play competitive cricket.

On Saturdays, when Hilton plays matches against other schools (they also compete in the *Natal Witness* evening cricket league), parents come

from wherever to sit around the ground eating picnics and watching their lads in the under-15 Cs; urging them to hone their skills and maybe make it to the under-15 Bs. Last year, Hilton sent its team to tour England and play in the Cundie cricket festival; their record was played 13, lost one.

"Who beat you?"

"Durban High School in the final at Cundie."

"Was that a big blow?"

"Well," the cricket master said, "we try to win, but we don't have post-mortems. Sport occupies a high level in South African consciousness. Before we were isolated, we were the best sportsmen."

"Why?"

"Well, it's the weather and the emphasis on outdoors and our history of success in internationals, probably beginning with the brilliant fielding of Cheetham's side in which McGlew and McLean and Endean did what Rhodes did.

Sunshine and inexpensive labour are helpful in the pursuit of sporting excellence, but love of the game and pride of their country is what gives South Africa the edge; this is a land of professional amateurs.

British driver leads weird and wonderful launch of the new Sauber-Ford

Herbert kick-starts grand prix career

FROM OLIVER HOLT
IN BADEN, SWITZERLAND

WEIRD was not what we were expecting in the stolid depths of Switzerland, but weird was most definitely what we got. The launch of the new Sauber-Ford Formula One car here yesterday cast Johnny Herbert and Heinz-Harald Frentzen, its drivers, in the roles of mildly embarrassed extras in a costume musical that made *Star Trek* look tame by comparison and put the extravagance of the Benetton launch in Sicily on Monday in the shade.

Imagine a science fiction version of *Springtime for Hitler* from *The Producers* and you might begin to get a picture of the cavortings on stage at the Space Dreams theatre in this village outside Zurich. There were men and women painted silver, multi-coloured lasers and a vast array of pointy caps. "We will join the race, we will be heroes," the cast sang as Herbert and Frentzen looked on. "We will go faster, we will not be zeros."

It took a while for the significance of all this to sink in, but eventually it did. "We are now taking you to a different world," a Sauber official announced from the stage. "We are trying to take you to a new dimension this season, to go where no man has been before."

After what seemed like an eternity, the singing stopped and Herbert talked his way through the next act, an episode that Great Britain's most popular driver is determined will not be his epilogue after a fraught year in the shadow of Michael Schumacher, the world champion, at Benetton in 1995. Attempts to sideline him undermined his racing credibility, although he did collect his first two grand prix victories.

"It was a hard year last year," Herbert, 31, said. "From the start, there seemed to be rumours that every race would be my last race. It was



Herbert commands centre stage at the launch of the new Sauber-Ford while Frentzen, right, and Norberto Fontana, the team's test driver, look on

stupid and it must have been coming from somewhere. Looking back on it, I think it's affected my performances and upset my psychology.

"I really lost all the enjoyment out of racing. I hardly spoke to Flavio Briatore, the managing director, in the second half of the season and it was very difficult. Coming here, they have been friendly

and welcoming and it feels as though I have got out of jail."

"So far," Heinz-Harald has shared everything with me, which is a big difference to what happened with Schumacher, and I just have to make sure it stays that way.

After last season, I got the feeling that people think that I'm not as good as they thought I was. I know that I am, but I have got a lot left to prove in Formula One."

Herbert accepted that he may find himself pitched straight into a situation like the one that he laboured under at Benetton. Frentzen is one of the most highly-rated young drivers and has already been at Sauber for two years. He is the team's No 1, but Herbert is confident that there will be

more pooling of information this time. It could be a good year, too. Sauber are powered by Ford V10 engines, there are high hopes of the new chassis and the new pairing of drivers is being touted as an "explosive double package".

Herbert said that he would like to gain a measure of revenge for the treatment that he received from Schumacher

last year by beating him in a race this season — Schumacher is now at Ferrari. Herbert thinks that Damon Hill is the favourite for the world championship and that Jean Alesi will thrive at Benetton — and, like everyone else, he was mesmerised by the characters on stage yesterday. "I tried to sing along," he said, "but I couldn't keep up."

ships. It was at La Jolla last year that he became so confused that he alternated between the cross-handed and the conventional styles.

Faldo, who returned permanently to the traditional method last September, said: "I won't be chopping and changing this week. I am still working on my touch but I am happier on the greens than I was this time last year."

Faldo knows that his putting is suspect when he leaves the ball short, as he did three times in his last competitive round, at Pebble Beach last Friday. "There is no excuse for coming up short," he said. "It's really a question of having the confidence to attack the hole. I have told myself to be more aggressive."

Struver, 28, whose best finish is a fourth place in the Irish Open, managed five birdies and a solitary bogey at the par-three 4th. "I played the best I've done in a while," he said. "I hit 18 greens and missed only two fairways — and then only by a metre."

Thomas Levet, the first French golfer to compete on the US PGA Tour, in 1993, shot a disastrous 90 yesterday, with halves of 48 and 42. In with a better chance of playing the last two days is Christian Cever, 74, and Tim Planchin, 75.

Wayne Westner was disqualified for practising on the Gary Player course after his 72 on the Lost City. He hit "about ten five-irons down the 10th fairway", and maintained that it had "always been regarded as a practice tee". However, Andy McFee, a Tour official, ruled that both layouts jointly constituted the tournament course.

Faldo's sinking feelings subside

FROM A CORRESPONDENT
IN SAN DIEGO

A YEAR ago, Nick Faldo was seriously worried about his putting and was questioning his decision to abandon the European golf circuit for the more consistent conditions prevailing on the US PGA Tour.

A missed three-footer caused him to miss the halfway cut in the Buick event and it was not until he captured the Doral Open, his fourth victory in the United States, two weeks later, that his fears subsided.

Faldo yesterday returned to the two Torrey Pines courses at La Jolla for the Buick event this week at ease with himself and with a putting stroke that he is convinced is close to matching that with which he won five major champion-



With *The Times* today,
a 24-page guide to the
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and details of how to enter

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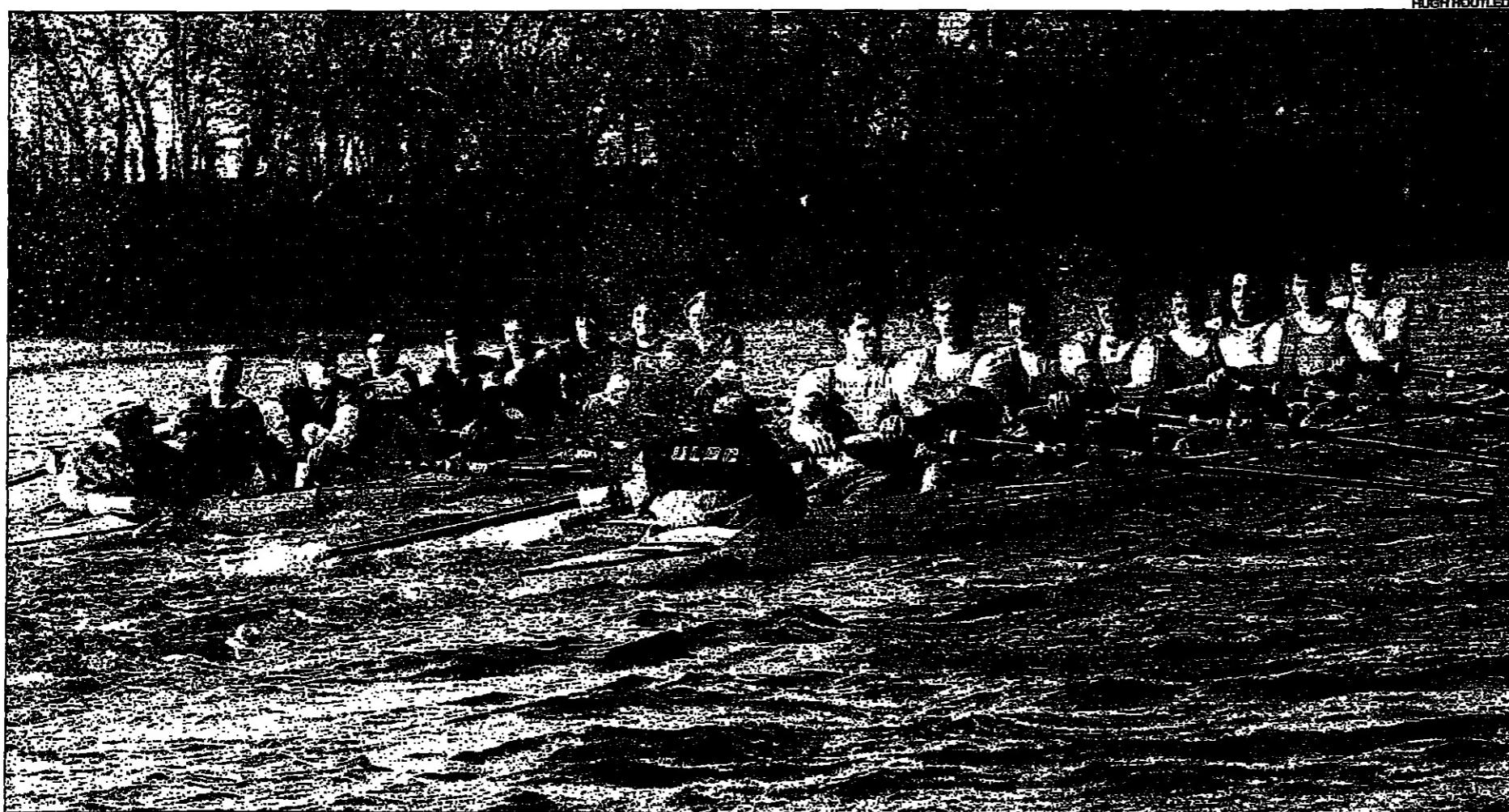
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Spray flies as the crews of the University of London eights, *Greasy Spoon*, right, and *High Fibre*, engage in their rowing trials on the Thames yesterday (Mike Rosewell writes). The crews included five full Great Britain internationals, three of whom — Rupert Ohholzer, Tim Foster and Graham Smith — look likely to be wearing Olympic vests in July. International under-23 and junior representatives were also present.

Greasy Spoon, on Surrey, won both contests, the first, from Putney to Hammersmith, by a mere canvas, and the second, from Chiswick Steps to Mortlake, by almost a length. In both races, *Greasy Spoon*, stroked by Stewart Whitelaw, the Great Britain lightweight international, took an initial lead but

never managed to break clear. In the first contest, Ohholzer, the *High Fibre* stroke, brought his crew back level just 15 strokes from the finish, but *Greasy Spoon*, with Tim Foster outstanding at No 7, squeezed ahead again. In the second, *High Fibre* seemed to have the race won when they took the lead at Barnes Bridge, but *Greasy Spoon*, helped by impressive steering from Jessica Wright, held on around the outside of the bend to complete a double.

Maurice Hayes, the London University rowing manager since the departure of Paul McGann, the Australian, last summer, said that Rusty Williams, his men's coach, and Dave Martin, the women's coach, two former University of

London performers, were instrumental in the club's present success and spirit. Interestingly, the spirit was enhanced by the inclusion of a race for two women's fours yesterday. Six of the crews involved will seek Great Britain representation this summer.

GREASY SPOON: Bow: N Morell (Hampton and UCL); 2, A Macartney (Plymeham and UCL); 3, Weller (KCS Wimbledon and King's); 4, T Jones (St Edwards and School of Church Missionary Soc); 5, J Foster (UCL); 6, G Smith (UCL); 7, R Ohholzer (UCL) and King's; 8, T Foster (Bedford Modern and UCL); stroke: S Watson (KCS Wimbledon and Imperial); cox: J Wright (Queen Anne's, Caversham and UCL).

HIGH FIBRE: Bow: J Hughes (Sir William Borlase and UCL); 2, D Burton (St Edward's and School of Church Missionary Soc); 3, S. Williams (UCL); 4, R. Williams (UCL); 5, D Bradley (Hampton and UCL); 6, L. Nolan (St Joseph's, Galway and Queen Mary and Westfield); 7, G. Smith (Westminster and UCL); stroke: R Ohholzer (Hampton and Charing Cross Hosp); cox: N Attwell (King's, By, and St George's and St Mary's).

Bradford plan union challenge

BRADFORD Bulls are the latest rugby league club to consider playing a challenge match against rugby union opposition. The move comes after Wigan's plans to play two games, one under each code, against Bath this summer. Bradford hope to arrange a challenge against Leicester along similar lines.

"We are investigating the possibility of a game against Leicester," Chris Caisley, the Bradford chairman, said. "It's an interesting development and could well be a financial success for the Bulls."

The matches between Wigan and Bath will be played on Wednesday May 8, at a northern venue under league rules, and Saturday May 25 in the south under union laws.

□ Rugby league clubs are to be allowed to sign five overseas players instead of three, the existing limit. However, those players from emerging nations will no longer be exempt from the register.

The Rugby League Council adopted the *Framing the Future* guidelines yesterday, under which clubs must meet minimum standards on facilities, appoint separate chief executives and finance officers and allocate half their funds from the £87 million Super League to capital spending projects.

Backwoodsmen intent on setting one more ambush

Christopher Irvine finds amateurs keen to topple another set of professionals

£20,000 for club funds and revelled in their odyssey. In a city dominated by the rivalry between its two professional sides, the interlopers of West Hull can boast of having gone further in the competition than Hull Kingston Rovers, who fell in the fourth round.

"People here have woken up to the fact that there is a team other than Hull and Rovers," Bennett said. "Unlike them, we seem to have the entire city behind us. We usually get 300 or so, but we're looking at around 5,000 on Friday night, which is better than Hull's average. If the York game is

anything to go by, the passion will be unbelievable."

The recent return fire, by the amateur seedbed produced 200 professional recruits last season, compared with just 14 signings, from rugby union. There is mutual dependence, but, without a vibrant and healthy amateur set up, the professional game would wither.

Unlike the professionals, the amateurs are sticking to playing in winter, and to the laws that existed before the mid-season introduction by the RFL of changes to the scrum, play-the-ball and restart. As the new laws apply in the Challenge Cup, West Hull must adapt accordingly.

"We have coped," Bennett said, "but it's hardly designed to make life easy."

At the club, which began in 1936 and was reformed 25 years ago, the popular consensus is that the team playing today is as good as any West Hull has had. With six Barla internationals in the side, there is no shortage of talent or experience, especially in the influential presence of Dave Roe at hooker, Stuart Parr at stand-off half, and Carl Newlove, provided he is fit, in the loose forward role.

Bennett admitted after viewing a borrowed video tape that Wakefield were bigger, stronger and faster. "They were all that — but that's not to say they will have our spirit," he said.

Whatever happens, the upstarts have already resoundingly made their point, raised

dispute about the running of junior rugby has got lost in a battle of bloated egos. Heads need knocking together for the common good.

Progress needs to be made and quickly. The amateur seedbed produced 200 professional recruits last season, compared with just 14 signings, from rugby union. There is mutual dependence, but, without a vibrant and healthy amateur set up, the professional game would wither.

Portway's signing from Romford, of the Essex Senior League, is a determined move by Purfleet to preserve their hard-won place in the premier division of the Ictis League, but unfortunately, Portway is cup-tied and so must miss out on the arduous assignment in against Macclesfield Town in the FA Umbro Trophy tomorrow.

Although bottom of the table, with just two wins and 20 goals in 20 matches, Purfleet registered a stunning upset when they beat Roshden and Diamonds, the runaway leaders of the Beamer Hornes League, in the first round of the Trophy at Nene Park last month.

So, they know exactly how they want to play against the Vauxhall Conference champions, who are at the head of the competition once again this season.

"At Rushden, we set out to do a job," Norman Posner, the secretary, said. "We had five at the back, four in midfield and one up front, and stopped them playing football. To do that and try to get something on the break was the only possible way we could beat them."

Gary Calder, who has steadily lifted Purfleet up the non-League ladder since being appointed manager in January 1991, when they were second from bottom of the Isthmian League second division north, is taking his team to Congleton for an overnight stay — weather permitting. "We're doing things properly," he said.

Calder believes that Purfleet are at the crossroads. "You mustn't forget the club is only ten years old," he said. "We either push on or slip back the way we came. I'm sure we're going to push on." The recruitment of Portway, and John Ridout, from Ealing, will undoubtedly help.

These signings are also a mark of the undiminished commitment of Harry and Tommy South, the owners of the club, who developed Purfleet's ground at Ship Lane on the playing fields of a derelict technical college.

At the end of the day, the club's future depends on the quality of the coaching and the support of the local community.

Christopher Irvine is a former player and coach of the West Hull backwoodsman team.

Christopher Irvine finds amateurs keen to topple another set of professionals

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Militant man has reconstructed himself

Many unkind things have been said about Peter York's *Eighties*, including the ludicrous suggestion that the 1980s happened too recently to merit a retrospective series. Well, maybe so, if you spent the century's silliest decade making meticulous notes of who did what to whom and why. But, if it is, as it is for me, all of a blur, then York's ridiculously stylised reminders of a ridiculously styled ten years have been rather fun.

Now, what has all that got to do with last night's television, you ask. Two things. First, that at the current rate of transformation I predict Derek Hatton will have turned completely into Peter York by the year 2003. And secondly, that *My Brilliant Career* (BBC2) has – like York's series – been a well-timed and entertainingly executed reminder of people and events which, without a bit of help, could easily be forgotten.

Last night it was Hatton's turn to take a trip down short-term memory lane, back to the strawberry fields of Militant-run Liverpool. One of my Big Three narrators, Veronika Hykes, was wheeled out for the occasion but she hardly got a word in. For Hatton, as we were quickly reminded, has a prodigious gob on him.

These days he supplements his income as a public relations man and television presenter by picking up £1,000 a night on the after-dinner speaking circuit. The patter, as you would expect from one of the world's great self-publicists, is silk smooth, particularly on the question of what he doo do all again? Yes, if it could be 1983 again but in 1996.

Life's very different politics are very different, the economy's very different, people are very different and, eh, Derek Hatton's very different." The timing of the top thud to coincide with the

defiantly scouse "eh" was immaculate. As his doting father said: "He could go on the stage tomorrow and be a comedian. The only question is – how would we tell?

However, it was Hatton's past, rather than his future, that was the master in hand. His father (interviewed rather successfully, while having his hair cut) recalled his son's early career as a fireman and his little-known involvement in the church. He was as fervent about religion as he was about politics, recalled a friendly curate. The same curate would later compare Hatton's story to that of Jesus Christ, which seemed to be stretching religious metaphor a little.

The key section dealing with the short-lived glory days of Militant was cleverly constructed, with contributions from colleagues, family and political opponents all intercut with symbolic footage of

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

Everton beating Manchester United in the FA Cup final.

The infamous day when this Trotskyite city council actually secured extra funding from a Tory government was marked by the Everton victory.

The crowd roared. Victory.

Patrick Jenkin, whose Environment Department provided the additional funds, was in no doubt where he had gone wrong. "The

one mistake I made was trusting Derek Hatton and they used that to try and smash my political career." As summaries go, it appeared spot-on and archive footage of cheering, chanting Socialists made it difficult to disagree with Hatton when he described Jenkin as "incredibly naive".

That, of course, marked the turning point. Mrs Thatcher was "incandescent with fury", Mr Kinnock incandescent with concern that if Labour council went round issuing redundancy notices to their own employees he could kiss the next general election goodbye. Hatton and his allies were expelled from the party, a decision which in Hatton's words, "marked the end of an era".

It also (once we had rather skated over the subsequent police inquiry and Hatton's acquittal on fraud charges) marked the end of a highly successful series. Its subjects, our fallen heroes, have been

tempted by the chance to air their grievances, while we wallow in delicious *Schadenfreude*. A most enjoyable combination.

Stephen?" Oh spare us – the sooner she runs off with the RSPCA man the better.

Mind you, now poor Patricia (Diana Kent) has met her end in a car crash the whole field of unresolved sexual tension is wide open again. Chris (Richard Hawley) may be consumed with grief at the moment but I have a sneaking feeling that if and when a new series comes around he might just be ready for a little gentle flirting. As long as he remembers to speak slowly... well, who knows?

Finally, *Third Takers* (ITV) was notable for two things, a technically impressive beginning and single tracking shot that appeared to go through two glass windows, across a street and up a flight of stairs) and an old-fashioned but still gripping finale. You can't beat a good roadblock. What came in between wasn't bad either.

• Lynne Truss is on holiday

BBC1
6.00am Business Breakfast (33712)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (Ceefax) (64063)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (Ceefax) (4147083)
9.20 Just Can't Cook? (s) (225118)
9.45 Kilroy (s) (5734820) 10.30 Good Morning (s) (21809)
12.00 News (Ceefax) and weather (6022199)
12.05pm Turnabout (s) (5673267)
12.30 Going for a Song (s) (52511)
1.00 One O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (67170) 1.30 Regional News (7760604)
1.40 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (3448415)
2.00 Pebble Mill (s) (7622022)
2.40 Moon Over Miami. Light-hearted detective series with Bill Campbell and Lynette Anthony. (Ceefax) (s) (4042977)
3.30 The Littlest Pet Shop (s) (5070170) 3.50 Look Sharp! (s) (1497880) 4.05 All the Poppy Show (2601596) 4.15 Julia Jekyll and Hazel Hyde (Ceefax) (s) (5840008) 4.30 Mask (Ceefax) (s) (1710575) 4.45 Newcastle Extra (Ceefax) (1048441) 5.10 Blue Peter (1793538)
5.35 Neighbours (s) (Ceefax) (s) (4945388) N.L.: 5.35 Inside Outster
6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (422)
6.30 Regional news magazine (642)
7.00 Game Tag. Bob Monkhouse oversees the quiz for stand-up comics (Ceefax) (s) (2489)
7.30 Tomorrow's World includes a report on plans to anchor an oil rig in the frozen waters off eastern Canada for the first time (Ceefax) (s) (266)
8.00 Just... Good... Friends... Penny... is determined to tell Vincie that she wants nothing more to do with him; but where is he? (s) (Ceefax) (80809)
8.30 A Question of Sport. David Coleman fires questions at Bill Beaumont and Ian Botham and their teams of sporting celebrities (4204)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (3035)
9.30 Alison's Last Mountain – Inside Story Special (Ceefax) (s) (3088538)
N.L.: 9.30 PK Tonight 10.20 Alison's Last Mountain 11.40 FILM: Soapdish 1.15-2.15am Daydream. Mariah Carey – Madison Square Garden
10.50 FILM: Soapdish (1991) starring Sally Field, Kevin Kline, Robert Downey Jr and Whoopi Goldberg. Manic comedy about a soap star's status being threatened by a supporting actress scheming to have her written out. Directed by Michael Hoffman (Ceefax) (s) (6080731) WALES: 10.50 All Our Lives 11.20 FILM: Soapdish 12.55-2.20am FILM: Crucible of Terror
12.20 FILM: Crucible of Terror (1971) starring Mike Raven, Mary Maude and James Bolam. A deranged sculptor is on the brink of success when the art world latches onto his life-like bronze sculptures. Directed by Ted Hooker (5199887)
1.50am Weather (6455619)

BBC2
6.00am Open University: The Changing Experience of Education (1650712) 6.50 Panel Painting (514202)
7.15 See How Breakfast News (Ceefax) (4245917) 7.30 Singing Roy (Ceefax) (52248) 8.00 E.O.T. (f) (s) (2335)
8.30 Johnson and Friends (s) (1368334)
8.40 The Record (s) (2541903)
9.05 Daytime... on Two. Educational Programmes. Plus, for children 10.30-10.50 Playdays (s) (25060)
2.00 Johnson and Friends (f) (s) (3692290)
2.10 Open View (10066151)
2.15 Sport on Friday. Masters snooker and FA Cup fourth-round replay highlights (s) (434460) 3.55 News (Ceefax) (1013083)
4.00 Snooker – the Masters (s) (5338)
6.00 The Munsters. Come Back Little Google (D.W.C.) (Ceefax) (496537)
8.25 The New Avengers. Streed. Purdey and Gambit investigate the deaths of several agents (Ceefax) (855002)
7.15 Electric Circus. Entertainment news and reviews (s) (65542)
7.30 Sounds of the Eighties. Featuring the Teardrop Explodes, the Pogues and the Style Council. (Ceefax) (s) (828) N.L.: 7.30 Hearts and Minds
8.00 Top Gear. Motorport. Reports on Carlos Sainz, the former World Rally Champion (Ceefax) (s) (815)
8.20 Gardening from Scratch. Last in the series (Ceefax) (s) (2266)
9.00 Rab C. Nesbit. Father Rab visits his father's grave and is reunited with his long-lost brother. (Ceefax) (s) (8125)
9.30 The Fast Show. Comedy sketches with Paul Whitehouse (f). (Ceefax) (s) (70567)

Funny girl Llewellyn Gideon (10.00pm).

10.00 The Real McCoy. Ian Edwards fills this week's showcase spot with the regulars who include Leo Chester, Felix Dexter, Llewellyn Gideon and Meera Syal. (s). Followed by Talking Cezanne (23151)

10.30 Newlight (Ceefax) (582267)

11.15 Fantasy – Football League. David Baddeley's and Frank Skinner's guests are Alison Moyet and Angus Deayton (s) (530267). WALES: 11.15 Welsh Lobby (32027) 11.45 Fantasy Football League (639538) 12.15pm Weather (7720107)

12.20 Snooker – the Masters (6350519) 1.00-2.55 FILM: Spirit (512403)

1.45 Weather (537118)

1.50 Snooker – the Masters. Highlights of the quarter-final matches from the Worbley Conference Centre (s) (603199)

12.30 FILM: Spirit (1988) with Paul Rhys and Russell Irwin. Drama about a woman who finds solace from her violent stepfather in her passion for a soldier during the Second World War. Directed by Jonathan Ripley (68045). Ends at 2.30am.

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes. The PlusCode number for each TV programme along with a VideoPlus+ barcode. VideoPlus+ can be used with most Video+, Tape and VideoPlus+ recorders. To record a programme, dial the PlusCode or call VideoPlus on 0898 121204 (calls cost 5p/min plus 1p/min per call, 10p/min for 10 mins). To order a VideoPlus+ unit, call 0898 121204. VideoPlus+ and VideoPlus+ Services are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Vision supplement, published Saturday SKY ONE.

7.00 Baby Egg and Soldier (6644) 8.00 Family Fun (7409) 8.30 Press Your Luck (3141422) 8.50 Love Connection (67078) 9.20 Count The Stars (62900) 9.30 Oprah Whitney (4022731) 10.00 American Idol (639538) 10.30 The Waltons (50422) 11.00 Beulah (71809) 11.30 Court TV (2691) 11.45 Opera (639538) 12.00 The X-Files (639538) 12.30-1.30am FILM: The Untouchables (1987) 2.00 The Simpsons (2367) 2.30 Jeopardy! (5737) 7.00 LAPD (1997) 7.30 M.A.S.H. (47161)

8.00 Just Kidding (64529) 8.20 Love Connection (639538) 8.30 The X-Files (639538) 8.45-9.00 The Next Generation (520571) 9.00 Star Trek: Generations (520571) 9.15 Star Trek: Generations (520571) 9.30 Law & Order (639538) 10.00 The Young and the Restless (639538) 10.30 The Love Boat (639538) 11.00 The Love Boat (639538) 11.30-12.00am FILM: The Untouchables (1987) 12.30-1.30am Powerboat World (422324) 12.30-1.00pm Powerboat World (422324) 1.30-2.00am FILM: The Untouchables (1987) 2.30am-3.00am FILM: The Untouchables (1987) 3.30-4.00am Weather (6455619)

SKY NEWS

News on the hour

6.00am Sunday (97048) 8.30 Century (52178) 10.30 ABC Nightline (64063)

1.00pm CBS News (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm NBC News (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Fox News (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm CNN (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm BBC News (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Sky News (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The History Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm National Geographic Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Discovery Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Animal Planet (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Travel Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Food Network (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm HGTV (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Home & Leisure (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Sci-Fi Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Learning Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Travel Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Sports Network (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Weather Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The History Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm Nickelodeon (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Disney Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Animal Planet (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Travel Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Learning Channel (Ceefax) (64063)

1.30pm The Sports Network (Ceefax) (64063)

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Chinese nuclear sale damages relations with US

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

TENSIONS between China and the United States are escalating on several fronts. They took another unsettling turn yesterday with revelations that Peking has sold nuclear weapons technology to Pakistan. That could lead to Washington imposing sanctions running to billions of dollars, but President Clinton may waive the penalties for the sake of American jobs and to avoid making links even more strained.

The nuclear proliferation issue comes on top of other flashpoints, including human rights abuses, China's sabre-rattling over Taiwan and its continued piracy of American software, music and videos.

There is a strong chance that China could become an election issue for Mr Clinton. His campaign taut four years ago that President Bush was codding the "butchers" of Peking could be hurried back by Republican foes.

Mr Clinton is under pressure not to impose sanctions on China from Boeing, Westinghouse and other big corporations whose orders from Peking account for thousands of jobs. But China has been identified by the CIA as selling specialised magnets needed to refine weapons-grade uranium to Pakistan. Under American laws, Mr Clinton could retaliate by cutting off all US government loan guarantees amounting to nearly \$10 billion (\$6.5 billion) to American companies doing business with China.

To waive these sanctions, Mr Clinton would have to declare that the business deals were vital to American national interests. The decision poses a quandary for the President. To impose sanctions would worsen relations with China and upset American companies. Mickey Kantor, the US Trade Representative,

has warned China that unless the piracy ceases he will impose 100 per cent duties on more than a billion dollars in Chinese exports.

This huge trade deficit is further stoked by China's refusal to honour an agreement reached a year ago to shut more than 50 factories churning out illegal copies of American CDs, videos and computer programmes. Mickey Kantor, the US Trade Representative,

of nuclear weapons comes before business interests. "Failure to impose sanctions would make the world a more dangerous place," said Nancy Pelosi, a liberal Democrat and China specialist on the House intelligence committee.

In fact, business links between China and America have become so intertwined that both nations would suffer if global politics and confrontation were allowed to intrude. Last year the United States exported goods and services worth more than \$12 billion to China, accounting for 200,000 American jobs, while Chinese exports approached \$40 billion.

China appears unwilling to compromise in return for any accommodating American stance. Two years ago Mr Clinton agreed to separate

trade from human rights issues, yet China continues its crack down on dissidents and other abuses.

In Washington this week, Li Zhaoxing, the Chinese deputy Foreign Minister, insisted that

the technology sales to Paki-

stan and elsewhere in the Middle East were purely for

peaceful nuclear co-operation, a claim America rejects. He blamed Washington for the downturn in relations, citing Taiwan as an example. Peking still lays claim to Taiwan as a renegade province and refuses to rule out force to retake it. China is agitated over Taiwan moves towards democracy, with voters electing a president for the first time next month.

US intelligence believes that

China will stage military exercises near the island to intimidate its leaders. US officials

warned China that any unprovoked attack would have grave consequences.



Taiwanese soldiers practise hand-to-hand combat during military exercises in the east coast city of Hualien

Lawyer arrested in Bahrain crackdown

BY MICHAEL BINION, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE spectre of Islamic unrest spreading throughout the Gulf and threatening the conservative rulers of the oil-rich states was yesterday strengthened by a fresh attempt to crack down in the troubled island of Bahrain.

The Government has arrested a prominent lawyer and writer on the ground of inciting sabotage and arson, a move likely to inflame unrest in the small Gulf island. Ahmad al-Shamlan was arrested by security forces who said that several suspects had disclosed under questioning that he had taken part in recent sabotage attacks and arson. He is the first prominent Sunni Muslim to be arrested since unrest at the end of 1994, largely inspired by Shia calls for an end to discrimination against the Shia majority and a restoration of the 1975 constitution.

The crackdown comes as Bahrain's neighbours are growing increasingly nervous about the demonstrations. Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent of Saudi Arabia, said in one of his first foreign policy announcements that the riots on the island were unacceptable and the instigators should be dealt with.

The six-member Gulf Co-operation Council, which groups Saudi Arabia and conservative states in the

Gulf, has blamed Iran for the unrest and accused it of stirring up anti-government violence.

Yesterday Bahrain, which has deported three dissident Muslim clerics it accused of pro-Iranian sedition, said Tehran had incited the protests. The security officials said Mr Shamlan had links and contacts with terrorist organisations abroad, and said that they would, when questioning ended, provide full evidence supported by documents to the legal authorities.

Iran has conducted a virulent radio propaganda campaign against Saudi Arabia, which now sees Iran as the greatest threat to its security in the region. There is little evidence that Tehran has been actively conducting a campaign of subversion, although a diplomat was expelled from Bahrain last week.

There is mounting evidence that conservative Gulf rulers are taking fright at moves for more democracy and are putting pressure on neighbouring countries to clamp down on press and personal freedoms. Kuwaiti officials say they have been warned not to move any further in extending democratic rights because of the dangerous example this set.

Eat out for a fiver

DINING OUT IS always a pleasure, but with The Times Eat Out For £5 offer, starting on Monday, February 12, it is also easily affordable. To apply, cut out the vouchers which are appearing daily. If you missed the guide in Monday's paper, you can order one by sending two first class stamps to: The Times Eat Out For £5 offer, PO Box 481, London E1 9BD. Additions to our guide: Raffles Restaurant, Aldbourne, Nr Marlborough, Wilts, two-course lunch - T. W. Th. F. Tel: 01672 540700; Stratford Lodge, Park Lane, Salisbury, Wilts, two courses, lunch - T. W. Th. F. dinner - T. W. Tel: 01722 325177; The Epicurean, The Promenade, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, main course from bistro menu only, lunch M. T. W. Th. F. S. main course from bistro menu only, lunch M. T. W. Th. F. S. Sun, Tel: 01242 222466; Yum Yum Thai Restaurant, High St., Loughborough, Leics, two-course lunch M. T. W. Th. F. Tel: 01509 260030; Luigi's Restaurant, Gipsy Hill, London SE9, main course lunch M. T. W. Th. F. S. Sun, dinner - M. T. W. Th. Sun, Tel: 0181-670 1843.

THE TIMES
Eat out
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VOUCHER

This voucher entitles the bearer and up to five guests to a one, two or three course meal for £5 each at any one of the participating restaurants in The Times Eat Out for £5 guide.
CONDITIONS OF USE
Reservations must be made in advance and the voucher presented on arrival. The offer applies to the Eat Out for £5 menu only at applicable savings for up to six people. One, two or three courses apply as specified in the guide. Where less than three courses are offered, starters and desserts can be selected from the main menu and the appropriate price must be paid. This offer applies to food only - drinks must be purchased separately. Where no drinks are purchased, restaurants may charge a discretionary 22 per cent cover charge. The offer is valid from February 12 until March 31, 1996. Refer to the guide for full details, days available and whether lunch or dinner is being offered.

IF I'D KNOWN I WAS GOING TO HAVE A STROKE,

I'D HAVE SAVED UP.

Stop working because of illness or injury and eventually you stop getting paid, as even the most understanding boss will only pay you for doing nothing for so long. Four to six weeks is the average time given, then they're sorry, but they have to think of the company. You may receive support from the State, but the basic Incapacity Benefit for a single person is only £52.50 per week. Add up how much you spend every week on necessities such as food, clothes, gas and electricity and you'll find it's nowhere near enough.

The truth is, it's still down to you to maintain your own standard of living and your family's, even if you no longer have a job, and no real amount of money coming in. Not your employer or the State. You. And to be honest, you're going to need some help.

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We may wish to pass on your data to other selected companies, who may then contact you. If you don't want this, please tick the box.

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No one protects more.
NORWICH UNION
INSURANCE, PAYMENT, HEALTHCARE, PERSONAL

Peking issues weapons warning

FROM JAMES PRINGLE
IN PEKING

CHINA said yesterday that the United States must stop selling advanced weapons to Taiwan if tensions between Peking and Taipei are to be eased, and it urged the Taiwanese authorities to abandon efforts to break out of diplomatic isolation.

Shan Goufang, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, reiterated Peking's commitment to peaceful reunification with Taiwan, but underlined China's threat to invade Taiwan if the island was attacked or if Taipei abandoned its avowed goal of *reunification* and declared its independence.

"The United States must not sell large amounts of advanced weapons to Taiwan for tensions to be eliminated," Mr Shen said.

Reports have suggested that China is planning major military exercises near Taiwan, but President Clinton said yesterday he was confident that there would be no military conflict because too much was at stake.

Kohl calls for more sacrifices as jobless top four million

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELmut KOHL, the German Chancellor, was attacked in parliament yesterday after the announcement that the number of unemployed had jumped well over the psychologically important level of four million and was worse than at any time since 1948.

The leap to 4.16 million was blamed partly on unusually cold weather, but the trend was unmistakable: it was the sixth monthly increase in a row. Despite a government action plan, worked out with the tentative agreement of the unions, the employment situation is unlikely to improve much this year.

This week Grunig, once a household name in electronics, announced the cutting of another 3,000 jobs, and Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, unveiled plans to reduce 7,000 public-sector jobs, including a 20 per cent cut in the number of German spies.

The Chancellor told parliament that his plans to cut taxes and stimulate growth would eventually make an impact on unemployment levels, but that everybody had to be prepared to make sacrifices and contribute to reforms. He let out some of his old animosity for Baroness Thatcher as he defended his cuts in social spending. He was not, he said, about to destroy the welfare state. "We never thought the example of Thatcher was something suitable for German conditions."

Reprimand for Bonn

BONN: A European Commissioner yesterday sharply criticised Bonn for its lagged implementation of European laws (Roger Boyes writes).

The reprimand by Mario Monti, the Commissioner responsible for the internal market, came as three German federal states looked set to face the European Court of Justice for banning the import of British beef.

Addressing an audience at Bonn University, he struck a raw nerve of the Government. "It is certainly not compatible with Germany's leading role in the process of European

We have completely different ideas of social obligations."

The unemployment figures were anticipated by the markets and the politicians, but they did nothing to dull the anger of debate or reduce the sense of hopelessness about the economic slowdown.

Last week the Chancellor brought together unions, employers and the Government to devise a package of incentives for businessmen, to map out welfare cuts and employ-

ment-creation measures in anticipation of the record unemployment level. Neither the Social Democrats, nor the leaders of the 16 federal state governments, nor the Bundesbank were invited to the round table and all are unhappy.

Mechanical engineering: Production is up 7 per cent, but the number of jobs dropped by 10,000 in the past year.

Building: 5,500 bankruptcies were reported last year and more than 6,000 are expected this year. At least 90,000 jobs are expected to go this year.

Car industry: It is estimated that 100,000 jobs will be lost in manufacturing and the spare parts sector between now and 2000.

Electronics: The industry lost 250,000 jobs between 1990 and last year. More are expected to go this year.

Retail trade: Between 30,000 and 40,000 jobs are to be cut this year. In the previous two years 90,000 jobs were lost.

Herr Kohl has promised to create two million new jobs by 2000, but there is no sign that employers have been encouraged by his rather vague initiative.

First, there is a suspicion the Chancellor merely wants to ensure that the Social Democrats do not monopolise the employment issue. There are three regional elections next month, providing an important indicator to the Chancellor's future.

Second, many employers believe that the unions are arguing on the basis of topsy-turvy economics. Union negotiators say that, since high labour costs are causing unemployment, then lower real wages should translate into new jobs.

Many employers claim it will be difficult to keep employment levels, even at their present level. David Herman, chairman of Opel, speaks for many employers when he says that unions will have to accept not only the principle of wage restraint but a lower standard of living across the board.

There is a basic resistance to big cuts in welfare spending. Rudolf Scharping, the Social Democrats' parliamentary leader, last night accused the Chancellor of deserting his responsibility to generate economic progress in a way that "intimately links it to social justice".

He mentioned Bonn's failure to implement laws on free competition in public procurement contracts. There were 54 new complaints against Bonn last year, the most against any EU state.

Integration to lag behind in this way," he said.

According to statistics, Germany has only applied 89 per cent of the measures needed to complete the European Union's single market; well behind most members. "What we need is a strong signal from Germany... and giving an example to other member states," Signor Monti said.

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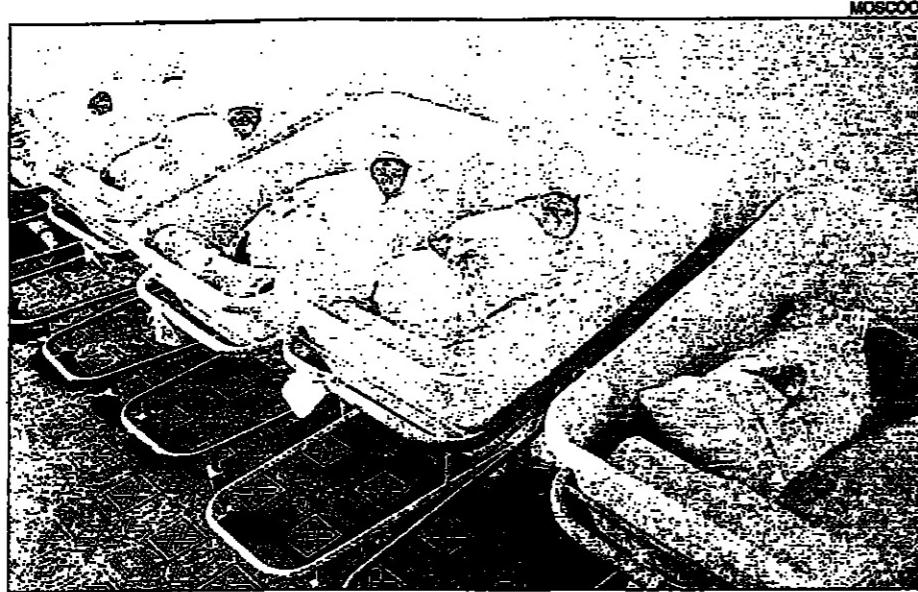
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The stolen babies of Lvov



Doctors made newborn babies "disappear" by erasing all traces of their existence



As many as 800 babies may have been illegally sold abroad to American, German and Italian couples

Baby-smuggling is now big business in Ukraine.
RICHARD BEESTON travelled there and met one of its tragic victims, brain-damaged Aleksandr Brooks, who was sent back by the Americans who adopted him

In a forgotten corner of a Ukrainian hospital ward Aleksandr Brooks looks out from his dirty cot on a grim world he will never comprehend. His blue eyes dart from side to side in steady rhythm, his hands twitch uncontrollably and his tiny voice emits a high-pitched squeak.

He has no toys, no visitors and only the bare green hospital walls for company. The overworked hospital staff are not even sure of his name, so he is routinely called the "American baby". They say he only seems happy when he sleeps.

Seeing him there is heart-wrenching; listening to the history of his short but eventful life is even more so. Since his birth three years ago in the western Ukrainian city of Lvov he has had two mothers and two fathers, has travelled to America and back and has had tens of thousands of dollars spent on him.

Tragically, for this tiny, blond-haired child, the money and attention is the cause of his problems. Now brain-damaged and abandoned, he is destined to spend the rest of his years in the care of Ukraine's overstretched state institutions.

In a country crippled by poverty and post-indepen-

dence chaos, and still suffering the after-effects of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster a decade ago, the plight of one child does not rate high on the list of priorities.

But the story behind Aleksandr is ugly. It involves the local health inspector, explains: "A terrible crime was committed against the children of Lvov by the people entrusted with their care, and this child is their most tragic victim. I hope the people responsible will be punished."

Ever since he was tipped off

MOSCOW

anonymously 18 months ago, Dr Kolesnik has worked doggedly to expose a smuggling ring involving doctors, local officials, and even senior figures in the Government in Kiev.

In spite of attempts to hush up the scandal, which even led to the shooting two months ago of the chief criminal prosecutor on the case, Igor Pylypuk, the investigation has now widened across the country. It is believed that 802 children may have been illegally sold abroad for adoption.

Lvov, a beautifully preserved medieval city of cobbled streets and towering church spires, has now been exposed as one of the most active centres of the adoption racket. Here more than 130 newborn babies have been stolen either from their mothers or from the care of the State, and sold to American, German and Italian couples for as much as \$40,000 each.

Aleksandr's case is typical how the operation worked.

now in the hands of investigators, the principal operators were three doctors, now under arrest and awaiting trial. They preyed on destitute, alcoholic and drug-addicted mothers, persuading them to turn their children over to the care of the State, before falsifying their documents and putting them up for adoption. Many of the women are too ashamed or frightened to come forward. But gradually their stories are being told.

Aleksandr's case is typical how the operation worked.

Born on a bitterly cold December day in 1992 to Hala Pup, an impoverished single mother, the premature, 3lb baby was exactly what the dealers were looking for.

It took Dr Vladimir Dorchenko, the head of the maternity centre, little effort to persuade the mother to sign away her parental rights and turn the tiny, ailing child over to his care. Once her consent was secured, the infant was removed from the intensive care unit and hidden in a flat belonging to a retired nurse.

With the child now out of sight, the birth certificate was backdated six months to facilitate adoption, and negotiations for the sale began with an American adoption agency. However, the deal was complicated on New Year's Eve when the child, deprived of the intensive care he needed, contracted meningitis and was taken to hospital with a critically high fever.

Although Aleksandr was now very sick and irreversibly brain-damaged, the sale still went ahead. Complete with his new identity he was flown out of Ukraine for delivery to his new adoptive parents in Massachusetts.

The American couple, Peter and Katie Brooks, both lawyers, who operated through a licensed agency, were now landed with caring for a very sick baby. After three years of expensive medical costs in the US they sent the child back. Contacted by phone in America, the adoptive father sounded very concerned about his son's tragic fate. But he remained guarded in his replies and refused to disclose any details of the adoption, in particular how much money was paid to the agency for Aleksandr.

When I told him of the appalling circumstances in which I found the three-year-old, he sounded genuinely upset. He confirmed that he and his wife, who had previously adopted an American baby, had taken the decision to return the child only after long

the mounting medical bills, costing several thousand dollars a month.

"We no longer had the ability financially or emotionally to provide the care required," said Mr Brooks, who added that he believed his adopted son would receive better treatment in Ukraine than in the US. "Selling him back was the hardest thing I have ever done. It was not done willingly or happily."

Although none of the Western couples adopting the children were aware that they were

born on the southern edge of Lvov, she was pressured again and again to sign her son over to the authorities.

"There was no room here at the time, so I reluctantly agreed," she said. "Later they told me he had died." In fact, her son is alive. Now called Brent Hanson, he is being raised by his adoptive parents on a sheep farm in Iowa.

Natalya Osipova that her real identity was exposed. Far from being a dedicated doctor, she was a key figure in procuring babies from vulnerable women for the smuggling racket.

as Emilia Danzig of Cleveland, Ohio.

The scale of the baby-smuggling operation, and evidence that corrupt senior officials collaborated by signing adoption papers, initially shocked Ukraine, where Western couples are now banned from adopting children.

"Ukraine was thrown back into the Middle Ages when its neighbours took Ukrainian babies, as the Turks did to fill the ranks of their militia," said Yevhen Krasnyakov, a Communist deputy speaking at a heated debate on the subject in the Ukrainian parliament earlier this year.

However, any hopes that the real culprits will be brought to trial or that the trade has finally been stamped out raises only a cynical shrug from most of Lvov's long-suffering people, grown used to widespread government corruption and unchecked gangster rule. Part of the scepticism derives from the fact that there is no law against selling children, and the three doctors now under arrest are being investigated only for falsifying documents.

"We had eight prominent members of the city gunned down last year in gangster shootings and no one has been arrested," said Igor Pochenok, the editor of the weekly Express newspaper.

"People here have become accustomed to the criminals getting away with their terrible crimes."

As for baby Aleksandr, he at least has one person who is still willing to stand up for his rights.

"I am not speaking as a Ukrainian or a doctor, just as a human being," said Dr Kolesnik. "I am going to make sure that those responsible pay for their crime and that the American couple, while not criminally at fault, are made to realise they are morally guilty."

"But as long as people continue to pay for children, there will always be a market for them."



Natasha Osipova wants her daughter back

illegal sale of babies by corrupt doctors and officials to the West, and the wholesale deception of their impoverished mothers, who were told that their newborns had died, or would have a better life being brought up by the State. As Dr Vladimir Kolesnik, a

According to documents

Lloyds Bank Interest Rates for Personal Customers

Investment Account	Annual Option		Monthly Option	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£100,000+	5.45	4.09	5.32	3.99
£ 50,000+	5.20	3.90	5.08	3.81
£ 25,000+	4.90	3.68	4.79	3.59
£ 10,000+	4.59	3.28	4.41	3.31
Below £10,000	0.50	0.38	0.50	0.38

30 Day Savings	Annual Option		Monthly Option	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£25,000+	3.90	2.93	3.83	2.87
£10,000+	3.65	2.74	3.59	2.69
£ 5,000+	3.35	2.51	3.30	2.48
Below £5,000	0.50	0.38	0.50	0.38

Instant Savings Account	Annual Option		Monthly Option	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£25,000+	3.80	2.85	3.74	2.81
£10,000+	3.45	2.59	3.40	2.55
£ 5,000+	3.00	2.25	2.95	2.22
£ 500+	2.65	1.99	2.62	1.97
Below £500	1.00	0.75	1.00	0.75

Gold Service and Asset Management Service Current Accounts	Gross %		Net %	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£100,000+	2.50	1.88		
£ 5,000+	1.50	1.13		
£ 2,500+	1.25	0.94		
£ 1,000+	1.00	0.75		
Below £1,000	0.75	0.56		

High Interest Cheque Account	Gross %		Net %	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£250,000+	2.75	2.06		
£25,000+	2.60	1.95		
£10,000+	2.50	1.88		
£ 5,000+	1.50	1.13		
Below £5,000	1.00	0.75		

Treasurers Account	Gross %		Net %	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£25,000+	3.50	2.63		
£10,000+	3.30	2.48		
£ 5,000+	2.85	2.14		
£ 500+	2.65	1.99		
Below £500	1.00	0.75		

Headway and Young Savers	Gross %		Net %	
	Gross %	Net %	Gross %	Net %
£250+	2.55	1.99		
£250+	2.50	1.98		
£100+	2.25	1.69		
£ 50+	1.75	1.31	</td	

Philip Howard



In the great linguistic debate, both sides claim Dr Johnson — and rightly so

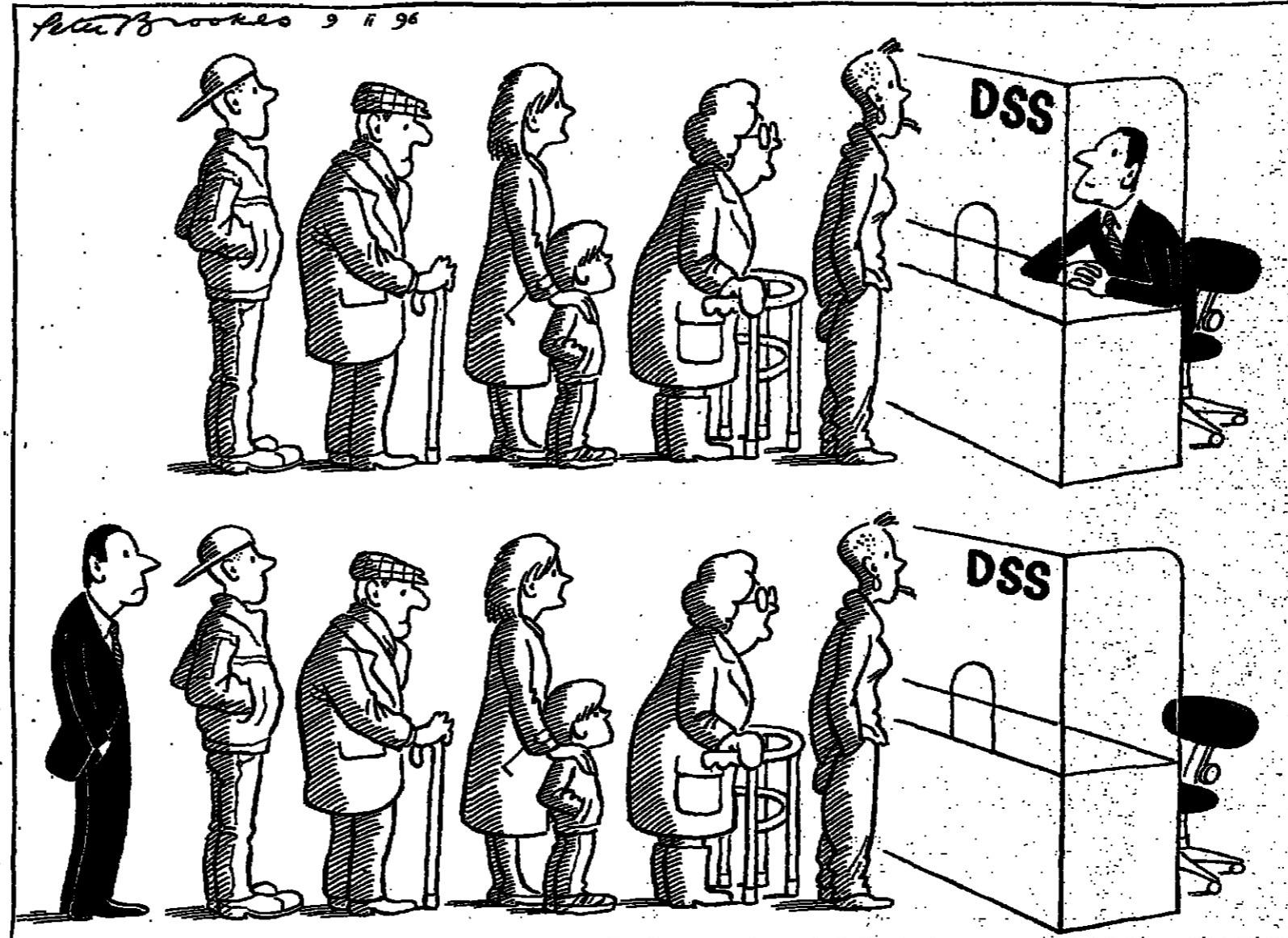
The Reith lecturer has poked her stick into a hornet's nest. Out buzz the crusades swollen with venom, stinging Jean Aitchison for permissiveness about language reminiscent of the worst excesses of the Tower of Babel. They cannot have been listening to more than the first sentence broadcast by the Rupert Murdoch Professor of Languages and Communication: "Is our language sick?" Her conclusion that this question is as illogical as "Is Friday morning pink?" is common sense as well as an academic cliché. But this has not stopped prescription pseudo-intellectuals spitting with rage.

She has been abused for betraying her classical education — "were it not for the fact that many classics departments have been taken over by political correctives and tredies". I have yet to meet a nasty corrective in a classic department. Classicists tend to be conservative. This is not surprising when the words for revolution in their languages are "new things". So beware of classicists, Tony Blair and your "new" Labour.

Professor Aitchison is labelled in billboard type as "A woman who hates English as it is written", and attacked for her supposed politics, trendiness, linguistic relativism and split infinitives — especially for her split infinitives. Honest guys, she only did it to annoy you because she knows it teases. The best reason for avoiding split infinitives is that they drive berserk the irascible pedants who believe that language runs on tramlines rather than joyriding down the open road. You do better not to split, not because you care about their taboo, but because you care about your reputation with your audience. But English is already full of engrafted split infinitives: to overthrow, to underestimate. And there are a few sentences where the meaning can be expressed only by splitting, when a modifier such as *really* needs to be handcuffed to its verb. "You are too young to *really* remember the war." If you unsplit by putting *really* before *to*, you could be misunderstood as focusing on *too* young. As a reader of a grown-up newspaper, you are too sensible to really fuss about such trivia.

Who are these prescriptivists who attack Jean Aitchison for daring to suggest that there ain't no such thing as perfect English, and for enjoying its rich varieties? They are white, middle-class, middle-brow males, middle-aged temporally if not temporally. Most of them earn a crust by writing "Why-oh-why?" tirades for the more excitable (and paradoxically more expensive) newspapers about how the world is going to the dogs, intellectually, morally, politically — and linguistically. They misunderstand the way language works. English is the one subject on which any native-speaker can claim to be an expert. The language prescriptivists find themselves growing older in a new world, surrounded by new ideas, new words, new grammar, new fashions, and younger rivals even for the low trade of old-boy punditry. Their problem is not the decay of English, but the male menopause.

How quaint that both sides claim Dr Johnson as their ally. Sam is like Scripture; he left so much that everyone (except a Scottish Whig) can find a supportive quotation in his work. Jean Aitchison and her critics are both right, like people describing Mont St-Victoire from opposite sides. As a poor Staffordshire boy who made good, Samuel was in awe of posh accents and "correct" grammar. His plan for the *Dictionary* declared: "The chief intent is to preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of our English idiom." But by the time he had wrestled with his definitions for years, he had come to see that the notion of preserving the purity of a language was a will-o'-the-wisp. So in his Preface he changed his aim, to "not form, but register, the language". Jean Aitchison is following in her master's footsteps, but there is far more language in different varieties than when Dr Johnson laid down the principle: masters of the shifting language record it rather than laying down rules. Johnson would have loved his blue-stocking professor as a woman with a bottom of good sense. And when vile Whiggish pedants sniggered, he would have put them down: "Where's the merriment? I say the woman is fundamentally sensible."



No immunity now

Advance attempts to discredit Scott and his inquiry cannot obscure the depths to which this Government has sunk

We are on the eve of the Scott revelations — I understand that they take the form of a very thick book — and you do not need to be a cynic like me to know that many people who will be discussed in its pages are now piling up the sneers, the rubbishes, the attacks and all the various reasons why Sir Richard Scott is wrong, pig-headed, lazy and ignorant. Indeed, before the magician opens his box there will be several suggestions that Scott has been insane for some time, and not a few more that he has been bribed. But I don't really need to mock the Scott tremblers, because there are so many of the real ones who are now busy lying, cheating and running away that Scott will have to write another book soon.

The bits and pieces are numerous — well, that is why the story has taken three-and-a-half years to unfold. I do not intend to go through those bits and pieces — there will be dozens of bloodhounds — hundreds — clutching this document or that denial, and I propose to step back from the gigantic hurly-burly and think of what this story really means. For the length is deep and the depth is long.

Let me start with a minor figure, but one who embodies much of the story. He is Lord Howe of Aberavon, formerly Geoffrey Howe. Picking up a copy of *The Spectator*, I find an article by him covering many pages and — no joke — several thousand words.

Now what has come over the old *Spectators*, that it allows onto its pages matter doubly unreadable — once for its length and twice for its prose? We find the answer very quickly: our Geoffrey has got wind of what Scott is jingling in his pockets. Yes, but why should he be the standard-bearer for those who are marked men? It shows great generosity, does it not? For these are interesting words:

The Scott inquiry is not a tribunal upon whose judgment the reputation of anyone should be allowed to depend. I write those words with regret and with a full realisation that no one should pronounce such a verdict without having given careful thought to its consequences ... I scarcely believed myself when I complained initially that this was an inquiry at which I was never before in defence. Lawyers may be born or not born, but many others who appeared before Scott share this perplexed and resentful view of their treatment. Since their reputations could be severely tarnished by the

outcome, the flaws I have described give serious cause for legitimate concern.

I'll Huff and I'll puff and blow your house down. For nowhere — nowhere — amid the scores of paragraphs that spill out in this dreadful screed does our hero tell us — or admit — that he himself has been up before the beak: Lord Geoff has already been rebuked, albeit very mildly, by Sir Richard Scott. No wonder he was spluttering. (But Boris Johnson, of *The Daily Telegraph*, should be ashamed of himself for joining the gang who are trying to rubbish Scott.)

Now we are told that Sir Nicholas

Lyell, the Attorney-General, is the first one for the chop. I would like a front row seat at any price, but I think that in this case there is more to a lousy lawyer than we can see for the moment. Suppose Lyell quits or is pushed: a considerable sigh of relief will, or at least should, be heard. But even I, the man who despises Lyell most, am willing to say that if Lyell is going to be the fall-guy, a very shocking miscarriage of judgment will have taken place. And I assure you that in the days to come there will be very many similar miscarriages of judgment.

You care greatly, readers, about the Matrix Churchill business? I am sure that many of you are thinking that it is something about Winston Churchill — perhaps another statue is to be raised. I don't care much about the Matrix etc, but I follow it not because of the depressing details, nor because I am looking forward to Scott's bag of toffees-apples, but because it tells me as clearly as Big Ben that the Scott report is yet another nail in the coffin of this putrid Government.

Before Scott pulled down the blinds (and remember that there was a very long and mendacious series of statements before Scott finished his open version of what happened in Matrix-time), the whole story pivoted upon the

fact that men from a British company, involved in selling arms, some of which would go to the evil Saddam, were simultaneously bringing back useful — indeed vital — knowledge. In the melee, there were arrests, largely of the wrong people, and under the boneheads of MI6 (what bones? what heads!) it seemed that nobody had had enough sense to give a wink and a nod and shuffle off a couple of dozen Matrix Churchill's when nobody was looking.

Even then, sense could have reigned, but it didn't. With a crash of cymbals, those who were there to straighten out the nonsense called up the nonsense instead:

"public interest immunity certificates" were waved (would that they had been waived instead), and from that moment the tide could never be turned. Folly, stupidity and incompetence reign in this story. And something else. That

of the signing of the dirty certificates (which, incidentally, will finish Lyell off) means that only

Heseltine remains in the clear (don't worry, he won't let us forget), and the rest are tarred with the dirt of the certificates. I have repeatedly said that "public interest immunity certificates" (or "gagging orders") are never in the public interest, but are always and only for the use of ministers and their minions who are trying to cover up something scandalous. (See, for instance, the attempt by Virginia Bottomley and Gillian Shepherd to cover up their appalling conduct with gagging orders and other documents concerning the dangers of listeria.)

So why do I wish to add my four-pence, when we are almost on the eve of the real thing? They say it is a very thick book: I say the thicker the better. I am not going to explain what Scott tells us; we will make it very clear, I am sure. So why am I poking my nose into things that will be fully poked within days?

It is because I have to deal with

what is left over: the wrappings of the sweets, the spent candle-ends, the pipes and the husks. For I assure you that very soon we shall all be up to our knees in rubbish.

Oh, that's even less than nothing. Already, the Prime Minister has announced that he will not act on any of Scott's findings. True, when Scott's inquiry was set up, the Prime Minister had no objections, and gave Scott everything that he wanted. But now, it might make his rancid Government even more shaky than it is already, so our brave PM looks the other way when Scott is mentioned. And he needs to, because it is clear that Scott will criticise him — very mildly, as with Howe — but the Prime Minister too has another small stain on his already soiled escutcheon.

And the snowball grows larger as it rolls down the hill. Try a few headlines: "Minister starts Scott damage limitation"; "Sir Nicholas Lyell is likely fall guy"; "Revealed: Scott report leak puts minister in firing line on arms sales"; "Lyell and Waldegrave will fight resignation calls on Scott report". And going back some time: "Lyell blames officials over PII certificates"; he would; "In Whitehall, preparations are well under way for a fierce rebuttal of the findings"; "Scott leaks aimed at limiting government damage".

But I have narrated, right through the years of Scott, one passage that I have kept, one paragraph that I wish I had written myself. It is by Michael Jones of *The Sunday Times*, and this is what he said:

The fundamental issue is this: What happened in the Matrix Churchill case threatened the rights of every British subject to a fair trial and the individual's enshrined protection from arbitrary arrest and loss of liberty. Magna Carta and all that flowed from it guaranteed no less. So what happens in the Scott inquiry and after matters deeply. At one level we find exposed those arcane parts of government that seldom see the light of day and only attract our attention when they publicly crash gears, as they did over the Matrix Churchill case. At a deeper level, we see a mind-set rooted in self-service, self-esteem and authoritarian precepts that threaten us all.

I eagerly await my copy of the Scott report. And I await, not eagerly, the realisation that whatever happens now, we shall have taken yet another step into the pit.

heading for the great division lobby in the sky.

"Bob gave me a huge thwack on the back and the potato just came flying out," Hayes says. "Alastair Goodlad [the chief whip] was eating at the next table. He turned quite pale."

• Australia and the West Indies may not be prepared to play their World Cup cricket matches in Colombo, but Asian schoolboys will not be missing out. A new computer game enables them to programme any combination of players they like to compete at any of the continent's grounds, in whatever conditions — and even to decide the outcome of the tournament.



Tina Turner: roar spot counters with the raunchy rocker.

Tina Turner has already done her bit in the recording studio, says the Choir School's Headmaster, Stephen Drew. "The boys will record their backing in the cathedral, and the tapes will be edited together."

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P.H.S.

Mugging up

JONATHANAITKEN, who left the Cabinet to spend more time with his libel lawyers, is certainly doing his homework. He has been checking up on George Carman, QC, the ferocious Great Defender, who is expected to give the former Chief Secretary to the Treasury a grilling when his action against *The Guardian* comes to court.

He has spent large chunks of this week in the public gallery of Court 13 at the High Court, watching Carman's every move in his defence of the *Daily Mirror*, in the case brought against it by a surgeon whom the paper dubbed "Dr Dolittle".

Aitken, who declared last year that he was leaving the Government to fight "the cancer of bent and twisted journalism ... with the simple sword of truth and the trusty shield of fair play", issued writs against *The Guardian* and *World in Action* over accusations about his relationship with members of the Saudi Royal Family and his business links with two Lebanese businessmen.

He has been very attentive at this week's High Court show. "Carman was doing his 'I shall ask you one more time and then I shall move on' act," Aitken was

grinning a lot," says one spectator. However, Aitken denies suggestions that he was there to get the measure of the man who has won cases for Jeremy Thorpe, Ken Dodd and Elton John. "No, no, nothing like that," he explains.

"There are lots of things that are very interesting about the case. It's a case with important ramifications. My own counsel, Charles Gray told me about it."



Those crusty individuals, Oxford college porters, have a soft spot for even the most disreputable of their former undergraduates. When discussing the exploits of a flamboyant Old Etonian undergraduate, one Magdalen porter was overheard saying wistfully: "The college hasn't seen his like since that Darius Guppy..."

Bluffery

THE MYSTERY that surrounds the identity of the author of *Priory Colors: A Novel of Politics*, the barely disguised account of the 1992 Clinton campaign, is being stirred up by the English writer Christopher Hitchens. The anonymous book has caused a storm in the States, with its "fictional" Governor Stanton, his steely wife Susan and a Jennifer Flowers character known as "Cashmere McLeod".

On Wednesday in Washington, Hitchens — who famously attacked Mother Teresa in his book *The Missionary Position* — astonished browsers at a downtown bookstore by signing copies of the book. And yesterday he said his own article in the current issue of *The New York Review of Books*, which speculates on the book's authorship, was a "double bluff".

I am very much looking forward to being the guest of honour

heading for the great division lobby in the sky.

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Snobs — but not nepotists

Magnus Linklater says Britain isn't so class-ridden after all

A friend just starting in journalism was explaining to me last week how helpful his public school background was proving. His upper-class accent and his eminently recognisable surname, he said, had not only given him an entree to the profession, it had allowed him to land a good royal story which had pleased his editor and given him a couple of rungs start on the promotion ladder. The old school tie, he assured me, had been a great asset.

I found that fairly depressing. Are a plummy accent and a few useful connections still the keys to preferment in Britain, like being given a gold credit card at birth? It is more than five years since John Major announced his commitment to a classless society, and rather more than that since Margaret Thatcher apparently swept aside the old boy net in favour of the brawny-boy culture, so allowing talent, enterprise and red braces free rein in Britain, irrespective of accent. Yet here we are, apparently still mesmerised by the discreet charm of the aristocracy.

In some ways, it seems almost as if we have been going backwards. At the same age, and roughly the same stage in journalism, I remember desperately trying to conceal any hint of privileged upbringing, flattening my simple peasant ancestry in order to convince my news editor that I was one of the lads. Putting on airs didn't get you far on the reporters' desk in those days, but then that was Manchester and those were the 1960s. Today, the Hugh Grant style seems once again to be a passport to success.

Recently, however, I stumbled across heartening evidence that this may be a superficial view, and that in some ways Britain is far less bothered by class, nepotism or social contacts than many other countries in Europe. Interviewed in the latest issue of the Bristol University magazine, *Non-Such*, Professor Gianni Angelini, an Italian who is now a leading heart surgeon in this country, says that in his experience, Britain is the most open society in Europe, encouraging talent and skill without regard to background or influence in ways that would be inconceivable in his native Italy.

Angelini, who began his academic career at the University of Siena, set out to study medicine with only a diploma in mechanical engineering. When he arrived in Britain he could not speak a word of English, yet today he holds the British Heart Foundation Chair in Cardiac Surgery and heads Bristol University's newly opened Heart Institute.

"I couldn't have achieved any of this if I had stayed in Italy," he says. "The Italian system is too nepotic. To climb the ladder it doesn't matter how good you are. If your father was a professor, you have a pretty good chance of being a professor. If your father was a lorry driver, like mine, I'm afraid you have a bit of a problem."

The professor told me that in Italy, where there is a surplus of 40,000 doctors, a foreigner "doesn't stand a chance". But worse than that, the medical world is in tightly gripped in the hands of a small number of professors at the top dictating all new appointments. Connections are vital. "The medical system is influenced by the political system, and very few university appointments are open to selection," he said. "This means that there is very little competition." Promotion tends to be based on the Italian equivalent of Buggins' turn. "It is like an inherited disease," says Angelini, "only the degree of the disease gets worse."

The professor has encountered none of that in Britain. From the start his progress was dictated by merit alone. One of the things that has impressed him most is the absence of political string-pulling here. "In Italy you have to be supported by a political party even to apply for a job as a road-sweeper. It's who you know that counts. Here I don't even know the name of my local MP."

France — where you either are or are not part of "le gratin" — has its own form of snobbery, an intellectual brand, which means that if you are not an *Enragé*, a product of the top stream of the grandes écoles, advancement is unlikely. "The aristocracy no longer counts, but the meritocracy has given us a new class system," said Stéphane Crouzet, head of the French Institute in Edinburgh. "Where you went to school is all important." Perhaps, after all, and almost without realising it, Britain is less imprisoned by its class system, less strangled by its old school tie, than some of its European neighbours.

A merchant banker in London, who told me that at one stage an Eton and Oxbridge education was almost a sine qua non in his organisation, now takes most of his recruits from Newcastle University. He reckons that in the jungle of the financial world today, a recommendation about someone's boy passed on over the brandy in Brooks's is almost counter-productive. If a candidate needs that kind of help, perhaps he isn't much good.

Another friend of mine, who interviews job applicants in a multinationals company, said that recommendations from friends or relations were noted, but rarely played any part in the final decision. How odd, therefore, that they still seem to work in the freebooting world of the fourth estate. A case perhaps, for a Fleet Street version of Lord Nolan's inquiry.

THREE COUNTRYMEN

Rural landscape has changed more than the political

It is as often a cause for alarm as celebration when the country's leaders all agree. Policies as unhappy as appeasement and the ERM have enjoyed a cross-party consensus in the past. But some worthy causes have also secured all-party backing. Sixty-seven years ago *The Times* was happy to publish a letter signed by the leaders of Parliament's three biggest parties pledging to preserve the best of rural England. Today we are pleased to reprint the same sentiments endorsed by the three men who lead the same parties. If only the countryside were as unchanging as the politicians' pieties.

John Major, Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown repeat, almost verbatim, the hopes outlined by their predecessors. Stanley Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald and David Lloyd George, in 1929, on the eve of another famous election when Labour was looking to make an historic breakthrough. It is perhaps unsurprising that the current leaders feel able to echo so exactly the call for sensitive development and thoughtful conservation of another generation for they are, so strikingly, the heirs of Baldwin, MacDonald and Lloyd George.

Mr Major, is like Baldwin, an unshowy representative of Middle England who has coped stoically with royal scandal and appealed lyrically to our nostalgic sense of nation, substituting warm beer and old maids for ploughmen and scythes. Mr Blair, like MacDonald, is a rightwinger with a cautious Shadow Chancellor; Mr Blair, like MacDonald, seems happier in establishment salons than in his own party. Mr Ashdown, like Lloyd George, combines grand rhetoric with a taste for the flashy and a special sympathy for the female sex.

Yet while these aspects of the political landscape seem surprisingly little changed, the shape of our countryside has been dramatically altered since 1929. The auto-

mobile's appetite for land, the mechanisation of farming and the twisted priorities of the common agricultural policy have combined to 'drive the England of Baldwin's boyhood to the margins of our memories. Village life, its rhythm surprisingly constant from the Anglo-Saxons to The Archers, has never been more changed: small shops are displaced by supermarkets, price prices are driven up by city refugees and public transport worsens.

Steps have been taken by the party leaders to enact policies in line with the principles to which they put their names. Last October the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, published a thoughtful White Paper on the Countryside which promised steps to safeguard village life. He has also worked hard to conserve rare species. The abandonment of many road-building schemes announced last November should also be applauded. It may be more a matter of conserving taxpayers' money than the land but it is welcome nevertheless. The main Opposition parties have been constructive critics of the roads programme. It is pity a good case has so often been spoilt by the antics of protesters whose lifestyles mock the traditional virtues of the countryside they claim to protect.

Aside from sustaining sensitive development there is one other service that politicians could do rural people if they sincerely wish to see, "the protection of our countryside in its rich personality and character". The modish metropolitan enthusiasts for a ban on fox hunting should be opposed. A recreation enjoyed by country folk of every class, as much part of the personality of rural England as its hedgerows and Norman churches, it is a liberty worth defending. The English character may be suburban but its roots are rural. Those roots require nurturing, not just casual neglect and the occasional agreement to agree.

THE MOSTAR TEST

If Mostar becomes a Balkan Berlin, all bets for peace are off

Nato has made commendable headway in implementing the military provisions of the Dayton agreement on Bosnia. Armies have been separated more or less on schedule. The task of marking out internal boundaries has fallen behind, but that is because of heavy snow, uncharted minefields and problems created where the lines on the Dayton maps saw through schools and houses. In most areas, the spirit of the agreement is being observed. The bitter disputes over the future of Mostar and Sarajevo, which we report on page 12, are exceptions, but they are very important exceptions.

If these two cities become Balkan Berlins, permanently divided, all bets are off for lasting peace in Bosnia. Sarajevo's reunification is the prime symbol and test of the readiness of Bosnia's separate Serb and Muslim-Croat "entities" to coexist in a federal Bosnian Republic. It is also the necessary condition for setting up Bosnia's collective presidency, parliament and supreme court. Mostar is equally critical, for different reasons. If the city remains divided between Croats and Muslims, the Muslim-Croat Federation will collapse and with it, the entire Dayton plan. Because the federation's Muslim and Croat cantons form a patchwork that could not physically be separated were Bosnia to split in three, the federation's collapse would mean war.

The reintegration of both cities is at a standstill. In Sarajevo yesterday the Bosnian Serbs, who had already suspended all political contact with the Bosnian Government, announced that they will no longer talk to the Nato-led implementation force (Nifo). The reason they give is the Bosnian Government's detention of Bosnian Serb officers, whom it accuses of war crimes. These cases are now being investigated by the Hague war crimes tribunal and unless Mr Justice Goldstone finds grounds to indict them, the men must be released. But this is almost certainly just a pretext. The Serbs have been looking for an excuse to avoid handing the Serb-held suburbs of Sarajevo

to Bosnian Government control by March 19, as required by Dayton. They are out to hang onto them at least until after the Bosnian elections due later this year.

That cannot be countenanced. But the Americans must also increase pressure on the Bosnian Government, which is in retreat from the multicultural goals which won it so much international support. It has done too little to convince the Serbs and Croats who make up a fifth of Government-held Sarajevo that they will have a fair share of political power, let alone to reassure the inhabitants of the Serb-held suburbs that they will be safe in a united city.

The ultranationalist Croats of Mostar can claim no excuse for this week's violence against Hans Koscicnick, the European Union's capable administrator for the city, or for breaking into the EU's Mostar headquarters. The fault lies entirely with the Croats. Mostar's 55,000 Muslims suffered terribly at the hands of Croat forces, who fought for a year to establish Mostar as the capital of an independent Croatian state of Herzeg-Bosnia. Yet they strongly support a reunited city. Herr Koscicnick has produced an administrative plan, as envisaged by Dayton, which is fair and sensible. The Croats moreover asked Herr Koscicnick to mediate a fortnight ago and promised to abide by his verdict. But now, urged on by Croat gang-leaders who make fortunes out of partition, the mayor of the Croat part of the city has reverted to the demand that Mostar be "the Croat capital".

Croatia, which supports Mostar's Croats while claiming that it cannot control them, has the power to stop them and must be made to do so. Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, is right to hold President Tudjman to account. In Zagreb on Tuesday, he should be blunt that there will be no more assistance to Croatia until it curbs gangster politics in Mostar. Money has begun to talk as loudly as gunfire in the Balkans. In this most difficult of peacemaking tasks, that must be accounted progress.

A CUE MISSED

There is more to snooker than balls

We have long known that snooker players were potters of ball. Now we can confirm that they are potters of cue too. The primitive wooden implement by which balls are propelled, into pockets as deep as a schoolboy's, is for many players more than just a tool of the baize trade. For this guild, the cue is a thing of mystique and reverence and — if a piece of wood could ever be described in this mixed-metamorphosed manner — a security blanket of blissful warmth.

On our sports pages today, we carry a report on how much their own cues mean to Britain's snooker players. The most famous of them all is Steve Davis, and his has also been the most famous broken cue in history. Snap, it went one day, by accident, and snap went his snooker form too. The man who has potted more titles than other, less-fortunate members of the fraternity of mispent youth (more titles, in fact, than any member of history) has won not a single tournament for more than 12 months now. A tragic snap, clearly, also, an expensive one.

What puzzles observers, and rightly, is why such great store is set by so simple an object. Is a snooker cue a work of complex craftsmanship, as a cricket bat is, or a hyper-modern fibreglass tennis racket? Evidently

not. Do cues come in a perplexing variety of shapes, sizes, finishes, sheens and weights? No, again. So what, dear Davis, is all the fuss about?

Our out-of-form ex-whiz is not alone. Cue-sporters (with or without anoraks) will remember the case of Stephen Hendry: for the sake of a lost cue that cost less than your humblest electric kettle (£20, if you must know), he offered an impassioned reward of £10,000. Mathematical readers of *The Times* will work out quickly that Hendry could have bought himself 500 cues for the sum put up for his pet cue's restitution.

There are other cue stories ... too many, in fact, to be told at once in this column. What is clear, however, is that snooker is played as much in the mind as it is with a cue. Snooker, as a game, makes fewer technical demands on a player than many others. Of course a snooker player needs not to be colour-blind. But more than sumptuous skills, he needs a still head, still feet and sang froid — très, très froid. Snooker is a mind game and a lost cue, or one cruelly snapped, can sap morale in a way that those of us who do not play snooker will never understand. Or perhaps we understand only too well: and leave the game firmly alone.

Party unity on the countryside

From the Prime Minister,
Leader of the Opposition
and the Leader of the
Liberal Democrat Party

Sir, In 1929, at the inception of the Council for the Protection of Rural England's appeal for public support, our forebears, Stanley Baldwin, J. Ramsay MacDonald and David Lloyd George, pledged their support for the English countryside in a letter to *The Times*. In the year of CPRE's seventieth anniversary, we are pleased to reprint the same sentiments endorsed by the three men who lead the same parties. If only the countryside were as unchanging as the politicians' pieties.

Steps have been taken by the party leaders to enact policies in line with the principles to which they put their names. Last October

the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, published a thoughtful White Paper on the Countryside which promised steps to safeguard village life. He has also worked hard to conserve rare species. The abandonment of many road-building schemes announced last November should also be applauded. It may be more a matter of conserving taxpayers' money than the land but it is welcome nevertheless. The main Opposition parties have been constructive critics of the roads programme.

It is pity a good case has so often been spoilt by the antics of protesters whose lifestyles mock the traditional virtues of the countryside they claim to protect.

We do this in the full confidence that necessary development can and should be directed with thoughtful and scrupulous attention to the charm of our countryside. Much of its beauty is the direct result of man's activities in the past, and in these days when the objectives of planning and land management and the appreciation of landscape are more widely shared than ever before, we ought to be able to make necessary changes in ways that avoid injuring our precious heritage.

We are, Sir, your obedient servants,
JOHN MAJOR,
TONY BLAIR,
PADDY ASHDOWN,
As from the Council for the Protection of
Rural England,
Warwick House,
25 Buckingham Palace Road, SW1.
February 8.

Role of civil servants

From Mr Hugh Colver

Sir, Mr M. G. Power's suggestions (letter, February 3) that Mr Michael Heseltine was wrong to ask civil servants to explain policy, and that anonymity is a virtue for civil servants, should not go unchallenged. It has long been the duty of the Government Information Service, in which I was privileged to serve for 17 years, to explain what they do.

Of course it is the job of ministers to explain and advocate their policies and to demonstrate how those policies relate to a particular party political philosophy. Indeed this Government has suffered politically because ministers have not sought to gain maximum political advantage from their activities.

However, it is nonsense to suggest that civil servants can never engage in dialogue about policy because any public protagonism of a policy that may be anathema to an opposition political party would make it difficult to serve a government of different parties.

As a head of information in a government department it is one's duty to serve ministers and to further the policies and to demonstrate how those policies relate to a particular party political philosophy. Indeed this Government has suffered politically because ministers have not sought to gain maximum political advantage from their activities.

In my experience ministers are very aware that they must not involve civil servants in any party political activity and government information officers are careful not to be dragged into party politics by so fierce an advocacy that misinterpretation is possible. This is sometimes a difficult line to draw, but ministers and government information officers are drawing it with great care and comparative ease.

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This is sometimes a difficult line to draw, but ministers and government information officers are drawing it with great care and comparative ease.

One thing we can be sure. Any future Labour government would expect to gain maximum advantage from the trappings of political office and would not understand a Civil Service — and particularly a government information service — that did not see it as its job to explain and promote government policy. Especially in the run-up to a general election, the Deputy Prime Minister was quite right to remind the Civil Service of its duty.

Yours sincerely,
HUGH COLVER
(Chief of Public Relations, Ministry of
Defence, 1987-92; Director of
Communications, Conservative
Central Office, 1995).
1 St Austell Road, SE13.
February 6.

Floral tributes

From Mr Martin Horwood

Sir, I wonder how much unhappiness the bleak instruction, "No flowers, please", to be found in the Deaths columns, causes to friends and acquaintances (letters, February 1).

Flowers are the one personal contribution that we can make to an otherwise formal, ritualised business. The cards accompanying them provide joy and solace to the bereaved family, the flowers themselves colour and celebration to the service, a lasting memory and some feeling of participation to those who attend. The next instruction might be, "No tears, please".

File my coffin with flowers, I say. It is sadly, the last thing that anyone can do for me in this "vale of tears".

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN HORWOOD,
Aldergate,
Aldington Road,
Lympne, Hythe, Kent.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Why heredity serves a useful purpose in the Lords

From Sir John Stokes

Sir, Mr Blair's intemperate attack on the hereditary peers' reports and leading article, (February 8) shows that he has no sense of history and no realisation that the House of Lords is the most efficient and respected second chamber in the world. Under Mr Blair's rule the age of chivalry would certainly be gone, to be succeeded by the age of the common man with a vengeance, with the powerful trade unions waiting in the wings.

I do not believe that this French-style revolutionary policy is what most British people want, who respect the hereditary peers and admire their patriotism and good manners. A part-nominated, part-elected second chamber would be a recipe for disaster. As Lord Falkland said in 1641, if it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN STOKES
(Conservative MP for Oldbury and
Halesowen, 1970-74, and Halesowen and
Stourbridge, 1974-92;
4 The Bradburys, Stratton Audley,
Nr Bicester, Oxfordshire).

From Mr Norman Chang

Sir, With an elected House of Commons, one is never quite sure as to whether or not MPs, when casting votes or when offering a Private Member's Bill for reading, are attempting to further their political careers or are conscious of possible deselection when their five-year fixed tenure expires at a general election.

Heredity peers, on the other hand, invite no such suspicion of motive. They have a life tenure and thus tend to be driven by principle and duty rather than political ambition.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN CHANG,
11 Croxham Road, NW1.

From Mr Peter Le Cheminant

Sir, The principle of replacing the hereditary House of Lords by an elected second chamber was clearly established by the Parliament Act of 1911. That Act expressed sorrow that "such substitution cannot be immediately brought into operation".

In the light of the ensuing 84 years' delay in carrying out the then Parliament's good intentions the worldly

wise will assume that the House of Commons is their initial self-selection by ego, that involuntary act of fate that comes to all politicians.

As a consequence of this the House of Commons may represent the people but, paradoxically, it is the House of Lords that is representative of the people.

Yours faithfully,

PETER LE CHEMINANT,
23 Weyles Avenue,
Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire.

February 8.

From Mr Lord Denham

Sir, You report Mr Tony Blair as asserting that the poll tax, "the most expensive fiasco in fiscal history", would never have become law without the hereditary peers.

Under the Salisbury/Addison convention, agreed by all parties at the time of the Attlee government, the House of Lords does not reject a second reading of a Bill that has been in the governing party's manifesto. This has since been extended to cover a genuine wrecking amendment, one which would have the effect of killing such a Bill without further discussion being possible.

Hereditary peers, on the other hand, invite no such suspicion of motive. They have a life tenure and thus tend to be driven by principle and duty rather than political ambition.

Yours faithfully,

NORMAN CHANG,
11 Croxham Road, NW1.

February 8.

From Mr Ian Mann

Sir, Tony Blair may view the House of Lords as the ascendance of heredity over democracy but this is misinterpreted its true value.

The overwhelming advantage of the hereditary peers is their initial self-selection by birth, that involuntary act of fate that comes to us all. The overwhelming disadvantage of the House

of Commons is their initial self-selection by ego, that involuntary act of fate that comes to all politicians.

As a consequence of this the House of Commons may represent the people but, paradoxically, it is the House of Lords that is representative of the people.

Yours faithfully,

IAN MANN,
55 Redcliffe Square, SW10.

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Hereditary peers, on the other hand, invite no such suspicion of motive. They have a life tenure and thus tend to be driven by principle and duty rather than political ambition.

Yours faithfully,

DENHAM (Conservative Whip, 1979-91),
House of Lords.

February 8.

From Mrs Penelope Lively

Sir, While welcoming the principle

that the book is an appropriate subject for celebration at the millennium (Simon Jenkins, January 27; letter, February 6), I would suggest that the proper medium is the British Library — the national archive.

The new building at St Pancras has had its problems but these



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 8: Sir Kenneth Scott was received by The Queen this evening upon relinquishing his appointment as Deputy Private Secretary to Her Majesty.

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh, as Patron of the Scots at War Trust, will attend a study seminar at Edinburgh University's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, Hope Park Square, Edinburgh, at 9.30; and will visit the Lower Methil Heritage Centre, 272 High Street, Lower Methil, Fife, at 3.30.

Today's events

The Queen's Life Guard mounts at Horse Guards at 11.00. The Queen's Guard mounts at Buckingham Palace at 11.30.

Luncheon

BATT-WALLS'S SOCIETY
Captain J.M. Gray, Master Mariner, was the principal guest and speaker at the 90th anniversary luncheon of the Batt-Walls's Society held yesterday at the National Liberal Club. Mr John D.G. White, president, was in the chair.

Appointment

Mr David Tatham is to be High Commissioner Inter-resident to The Maldives, and succeeds Mr John Field who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service.

Birthdays

Mr Norman Adams, painter and ceramic sculptor, 69; **Countess of Airlie**, 63; **Mr Brian Bennett**, **Shadows**, drummer, 56; **Mr Ryland Davies**, tenor, 53; **Mr Christopher B.M. Dunn-Arnes**, former director, RAF Nursing Services, 75; **Miss Mia Farrow**, actress, 51; **Dr Garret Fitzgerald**, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, 70; **Mr Paul Flynn**, MP, 61; **Mr Bernard Gallagher**, golfer, 47; **Dr George Guest**, organist, 72; **Mr Justice Johnson**, 63; **Mr Ben E. King**.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: William Henry Harrison, 9th American President 1841, Berkley, Virginia, 1773; Edward Carson, 1st Baron Carson, lawyer and leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Dublin, 1854; Anthony Hope, novelist, son of Sir Anthony Hope, novelist, London, 1863; Mrs Patrick Campbell, actress, London, 1865; Alben Berg, composer, Vienna, 1885; Jim Laker, cricketer, Bradford, 1922; Brenda Behan, writer, Dublin, 1923; **DEATHS:** John Hooper, Bishop of Worcester, born at the stake, Gloucester, 1555; Devil Mackay, Astronomer Royal 1665-1811; Greenaway, 1811; Henry Gally Knight, architect and writer, London, 1846; Fyodor Dostoevsky, novelist, St Petersburg, 1851; **1972**

Later The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were entertained at dinner by the High Commissioner for New Zealand (His Excellency Mr John Collinge) at 43 Chelsea Square, London SW3.

Lectures

Royal Society
Professor B. Roques delivered the Claude Bernard lecture to the Royal Society yesterday at 6 Carlton House Terrace, Dame Anne McLaren, FRS, Foreign Secretary of the society, presided.

The Bristol Society

The High Sheriff of Avon, the Vice-Chancellors of the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England and the Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset were present at a Lecture given for the Bristol Society by the Bishop of Oxford at the Council House last night. Mr St John Hartnell, Chairman of the Society, presided and Mr Mark Molynex of Ernst & Young gave the vote of thanks. Ernst & Young hosted a supper afterwards.

Reception

Saddlers' Company
Mr Richard Ling, Master of the Saddlers' Company, presented prizes to the winners in the Society of Master Saddlers annual saddleery competition at a reception held last night at Saddlers' Hall. The winners were:

Class 1: Mr Peter Husbands; Class 2 and best entry, saddle, Mr Jeremy Ridge, Class 3, Mr Lee Jennings; Classes 4, 5 and 6, best entry, Miss Anna Penhaligon, 50; Mr Silvio Fagioli, Italian Special Representative in the European Union Inter-Governmental Conference Reflection Group, was the guest speaker. Later, Lord Dahrendorf, chairman of the group, presided at a dinner. Lord Judd, Mr Hugh Dykes, MP and Mr Charles Kennedy, MP, also spoke.

European-Atlantic Group

Mr Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP, presided at a meeting of the European-Atlantic Group held last night at the House of Commons. Mr Silvio Fagioli, Italian Special Representative in the European Union Inter-Governmental Conference Reflection Group, was the guest speaker. Later, Lord Dahrendorf, chairman of the group, presided at a dinner. Lord Judd, Mr Hugh Dykes, MP and Mr Charles Kennedy, MP, also spoke.

Retirement

The Rev John E Gibey from Kirkham.

The Rev John Murrie from Kirkliston.

The Rev William Taylor from Buckie North.

Church of Scotland

Ordinations & inductions

The Rev Rolf H Biles to Shoreditch, Kilnwick.

The Rev Ian McIlroy to Kirkmaiden with Stoneykirk.

The Rev Ian A Sutherland to Lybster and Brora.

The Rev Bruce F Neill to Maxton with Merton with St Boswells.

Transitions

The Rev Kenneth J Panison from Associate at St Andrews' & St George's, Edinburgh to Kilmuir & Logic Easter.

The Rev Hugh Watt from Lochwood, Glasgow, to Urquhart and Glenmoriston.

The Rev Dr Ada Younger from Garthlock & Craigend East, Glasgow to Dennistoun Central, Glasgow.

Deaths

The Rev John E Gibey from Kirkliston.

The Rev John Murrie from Kirkliston.

The Rev William Taylor from Buckie North.

Marriage

Mr M.A.A. Wauchoppe
and **Mrs G.S.R. de Wet**
The marriage took place in Kloof, Natal, on February 3, of Michael Wauchoppe, of Mayfield, East Sussex, and Glory de Wet, of Natal.

Memorial service

Mr Richard Caldwell
A service of thanksgiving for the life of Mr Richard Cuthbert Gilian Caldwell, actor, was held yesterday at St Paul's Covent Garden, Canon John Oates, Rector of St Bride's, Fleet Street, and Chaplain to the Adelphi Theatre, officiated.

Mr Jonathan Caldwell-Bull, son, read the lesson. Mr Frank Thurner, part owner of Mr Alan Davis gave an address. Miss Liz Robertson, soprano, accompanied by Mr Chris Walker, piano, sang "Lowry" from *My Fair Lady*.

Dinners

Gardeners' Company
Mr D.E.F. Gillin, Master of the Gardeners' Company, presided at the livery and ladies' dinner held last night at the Mansion House. Mr I.B. Flanagan, Upper Warden, Alderman Sir Francis McWilliams and Mrs Cecilia Gerrard, Chairman of Surrey County Council, also spoke.

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University news

Glasgow

Professor Sandy Love to the Chair of Equine Clinical Studies. Professor Love was previously a Senior Lecturer in the university's Department of Veterinary Medicine.

Professor Peter A. Kemp to the Chair of Housing & Urban Studies. Professor Kemp is presently Joseph Rowntree Professor of Housing Policy and Director of the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York.

Professor Ivan N Turuk to the Chair of Urban Economic Development from April 1. Professor Turuk is presently Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Strathclyde.

Professor Simon Wheeler to the Chair of Civil Engineering. Professor Wheeler was previously a Lecturer in Civil Engineering at the University of Oxford.

Mr John Ferguson Simpson, of



Dave and Iris Smith — reliving the days when they courted on a Routemaster

Forty years on the buses

A COUPLE, who met and became engaged on a bus, relived their courtship yesterday by boarding an historic red London Routemaster. Dave Smith, 67, and his wife Iris, 62, were making a commemorative journey 40 years after the most famous of the capital's buses first took to the road. Mr Smith was one of the original drivers on February 8, 1956. His wife said: "We met on a bus. I was a trainee conductress and he got on and tried to chat me up — but I wasn't having any of it." The couple, from Slough, Berkshire, travelled from Victoria to Crystal Palace to celebrate the bus's birthday. Mr Smith said the Routemaster was revolutionary. "It was a dream to drive — it was just like riding a bike or driving a car. The smoothness was entirely different." Many are still in service today.



An early London Routemaster bus, one of nearly 500 that were totally refurbished four years ago

Lates wills

Upton Grey, Hampshire, the ear, nose and throat specialist, former consultant at St Mary's Hospital, London, a leading authority on throat cancer and a pioneer of laryngeal surgery, left estate valued at £369,365 net.

Marie Vera Steele, of South Normanton, Derbyshire, left estate valued at £10,954 net.

Stella Lee, of Rye, East Sussex, left estate valued at £677,261.

Sarah Margaret Drake, of Guildford, Surrey, £1,282,236.

Mr James Cobett, of York, £1,983,464.

Marie Gertrude Glover, of Crosby, Merseyside, £713,501.

Mr Nicholas Meekes, of Doncaster, South Yorkshire, £600,087.

Mr Harold Desmond Francis de Beynon-Shears, of London, retired business executive, £602,714.

Mr Henry Beaumy Pirelli, of London, SW5, £1,178,783.

Other estates include (net, before tax):

Mrs Aileen Constant, of Redhill, Surrey, £608,070.

Mr Charles Edward Croon, of Ringmer, East Sussex, £677,261.

Mr James Cobett, of York, £1,282,236.

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OBITUARIES

THE MOST REV DEREK WORLOCK

The Most Rev Derek Worlock, CH, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool, died yesterday from lung cancer aged 76. He was born on February 4, 1920.

The 52-year ecclesiastical career of Derek Worlock straddled the period of greatest upheaval and adjustment in the recent history of the Roman Catholic Church. Fortunately, most of it happened at a time when he was still young enough to adapt to it himself. The successful adjustment of the English Catholic community to changed social mores owes as much to him as to any man.

His remark in 1968 that avoidance of "reception was not the acid test of C. gravity", while irreproachably orthodox nonetheless expressed an English attitude which soothed the handling of that divisive issue among Catholics in the decades ahead. Like Newman, Worlock was someone prepared to drink the Pope's health, but preferred to drink to conscience first.

For the greater part of his influence was exercised out of sight. Those who oblige others to compromise are themselves liable to be the target of others' frustrations, and Worlock sometimes felt the weight of that. He was inclined to depression, even a touch of paranoia. He was certainly more popular and liked, both by his flock and by those around him, than he seemed willing to allow.

Derek John Harford Worlock was born in London, the son of parents, Captain Harford Worlock and Dora Worlock, who were both converts to the Roman Catholic faith. It was a lively and stimulating household, each parent taking an informed interest in the affairs of the day. His father was Conservative agent for the Winchester constituency, where the family moved in 1929, and his mother believed in and worked for the emancipation of women, particularly on the suffrage question.

Worlock was the only Roman Catholic pupil during his time at Winton House preparatory school. After his studies at St Edmund's College Ware, he enrolled at the seminary at Allen Hall to train for the priesthood. His ordination was at Westminster Cathedral in June 1944, and his first appointment as a curate was to Our Lady of Victories, Kensington.

His discreet and conscientious manner had impressed the authorities at Allen Hall, who identified him as a potentially gifted administrator; possibly his father's example as an "organisation man" within the Tory party had shaped his operating style. Only a year after his ordination he was chosen to be private secretary to Cardinal Griffin, then in the early stages of his term as Archbishop of Westminster, and thus began Worlock's long association with the internal machinery of English Roman Catholic institutions.

He was made a monsignor at 29, a very early age, and served to the end of

Cardinal Griffin's life and throughout his successor's reign. On Cardinal Godfrey's death in 1963, Worlock remained to help to settle in Archishop [later Cardinal] Heenan, but had clearly earned himself a more senior rank. As an obvious preparation for the episcopacy, he was made parish priest of St Mary and St Michael in the East End of London, where he remained for only just under two years but still made a considerable impression.

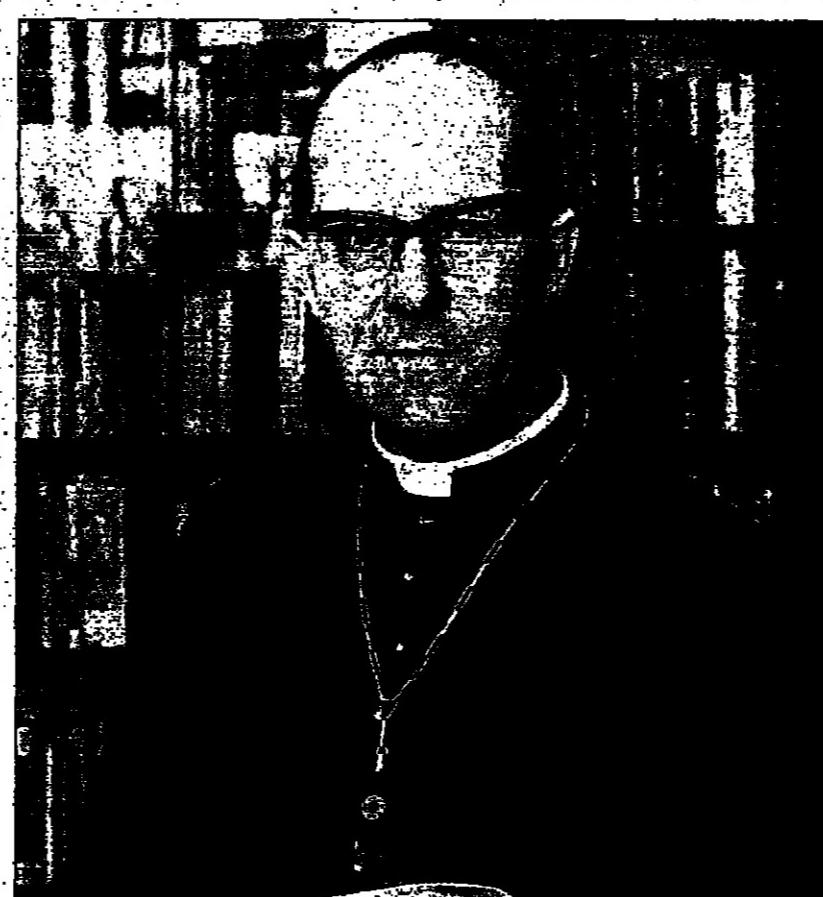
There he developed a surprising ministry for down-and-outs, and established a pastoral service for the Irish immigrants who sometimes arrived homeless and penniless at London railway stations. It is said that on his consecration as Bishop of Portsmouth in 1965, an elderly East End tramp turned up at the cathedral to be near to the "Father Worlock" who had befriended him.

Worlock was, of all people, probably the most intimately involved in the English presence at the Second Vatican Council, both as the secretary to the English cardinals who successively took part and as a peritus, or official consultant, in which capacity he interested himself in defining and developing the role and status of the Catholic laity. He is believed to have kept a detailed private diary of the council; it is plain that his close involvement in it greatly influenced his theological outlook.

The most immediate English product of the council was the setting up of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in place of the more ad hoc structure of the English hierarchy, and as Bishop of Portsmouth he was the ideal choice as its first episcopal secretary. He also became a consultant to the new Council of Latin in Rome, reflecting his earlier interest, and presided over the Latin Commission which the English bishops created soon afterwards. In that capacity he played the key role in handling the widespread and threatening outbreaks of dissent following the publication in 1968 of Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae* on birth control.

Worlock kept his bridges intact in all directions, including the London intellectual Roman Catholic scene where dissent was most outspoken and organised. His own view of the matter was unclear, though he had obvious human sympathies with married couples who found the Pope's teaching too extreme. He was helpful towards those of the younger clergy who found *Humanae Vitae* to be an acute challenge to their consciences. But there is nothing to suggest that Worlock was ever anything but completely loyal to the Pope's position, even if he might have wished it had been differently expressed.

His years at Portsmouth were successful locally, with unprecedented ecumenical co-operation and the projection of an image for the Roman Catholic Church in local political and civic affairs that was



well received. He took on a programme of renewal of the local church institutional life that was a model of how things could be done, with lay people closely involved in a structure of consultation at parish, deanery and diocesan level.

Worlock was an obvious candidate for Westminster on the death of Cardinal Heenan, though his long service as private secretary to three previous incumbents had left him with a reputation, unfairly, as a hatchet man who had to carry out tough decisions on behalf of his superiors. More than anything else, this counted against him and he felt a sense of bitterness at what seemed to him to be a diocesan plot to keep him out.

But on the surprisingly adventurous appointment of the Abbot of Ampleforth, almost simultaneously with Worlock's own translation to Liverpool, he was splendidly loyal and supportive. When the newly consecrated Basil Hume led the Benedictine monks into Westminster Abbey for vespers on the evening of his installation at the cathedral — itself an ecumenical breakthrough few who were there will forget — Worlock was conspicuously present, the most senior Catholic prelate in the abbey.

Liverpool archdiocese had been governed benignly by Archbishop Beck but urgently needed repairs to its structural life before spiritual renewal could begin.

and almost immediately upon his appointment the new archbishop tackled this vast and intractable problem. At the same time he took up an earlier acquaintance with David Sheppard, the Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, which both men nurtured into a productive, indeed unique, friendship. Nowhere else in Britain was there to be seen a better relationship between two overlapping episcopal regimes, and Worlock benefited as Sheppard's insight into inner city life gave him the mission of the Christian Church. Only in Liverpool could it be said that Pope John XXIII's exhortation "to do separately only those things we cannot do together" was manifestly achieved.

On Worlock's translation to Liverpool, it was a natural progression for him to move from the post of episcopal secretary of the national conference of bishops to being its vice-president. This maintained his fruitful relationship with Cardinal Hume, who became president at about the same time. They were close allies in several projects: the Liverpool National Pastoral Congress in 1980; the attempts to move the synod of bishops in Rome in a more liberal direction on marriage issues later the same year; and the visit of Pope John Paul II to Britain in 1982.

The Liverpool congress was something of a triumph for the city's archbishop. He

supported the idea in its sometimes awkward gestation period, presided over the complex preparations, moved smoothly round behind the scenes while it was taking place, attending to the fine-tuning, and brought the bishops afterwards to the point where they could endorse, as their own strategy for the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, most of what the congress had asked for.

Later that year it fell to him to tell the Pope and other world leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, in public, that church discipline on divorce and remarriage was too severe. In the context, speaking to members of the international synod of bishops in Rome, it took some courage for Worlock to question the established line particularly as the Pope was well known to hold strong and very conservative views.

Though Worlock failed to achieve a public shift — in fact the Pope took what seemed to be an even more restrictive line in his response — Worlock was undoubtedly viewing a change in Catholic opinion. What he urged was a "development" rather than a change, though on the key issue, the sinfulness of every act of contraceptive intercourse, development indeed meant change. In his archdiocese, priests were given to understand that he would not criticise them if they used their own judgment; nor if they encouraged divorced and remarried Catholics, in the right circumstances, to receive Holy Communion. But he always made plain that he sought justification for such pastoral strategies in orthodox theological thinking; he was not a rebel, nor did he encourage the rebellious.

Worlock made great efforts to ensure that the Pope was very well briefed before visiting Britain in 1982, and the visit's striking success owed much to him. Even on the issue of Holy Communion for those in irregular marriages, the Pope's remarks seemed to convey a belated acknowledgement of the strength of the Worlock case. At least he did not explicitly condemn what he must have known the Archbishop of Liverpool was discreetly encouraging, emphasising compassion rather than law. Worlock's very point.

One of his small personal triumphs was to persuade the Vatican to allow the Pope to visit the Anglican cathedral in Liverpool, and the sudden spontaneous applause of that mixed but largely non-Catholic congregation was his reward.

The moment is still remembered as a landmark in relations between the different churches of a city not until then known for a spirit of religious reconciliation.

His service to Liverpool in other ways was immense. At the time of the Toxteth riots Worlock made it his business, sometimes with David Sheppard and sometimes alone, to intercede with the police and with the black community. It was in the course of observing their conflict on the street first-hand that he was

almost mown down by a charging police vehicle. Toxteth brought him close to Liverpool's many agonies as nothing had done before, and opened many doors to the Church which would otherwise have stayed locked.

Two football tragedies, Heyes and Hillsborough, brought massive grief and notoriety to Liverpool in the 1980s. After Liverpool fans rioted and many fans of the Italian club Juventus died in the ensuing clash, Worlock was crucial in the effort to heal relations between his city and Turin, which he visited afterwards with a civic delegation.

The Hillsborough disaster in 1989 brought one of the most extraordinary acts of Christian ministry of his, or indeed any, career. He visited the stadium in Sheffield, where the deaths happened, then returned immediately to preside over a Requiem Mass in his cathedral, broadcast live by radio and television. Spontaneously the cathedral itself was packed, and the street and open space outside became the focus of an extraordinary gathering of silent people, many of them young fans or parents of fans, all of them traumatised by their horror and loss.

The occasion, and his words of comfort so widely broadcast, seemed to bring the very mercy of God to meet the city's sore needs. What he conveyed was his total participation in the suffering, which he deeply felt. The last barrier between the shy, intellectual middle-class southerner and this tough northern working-class city had come down. For all his other efforts for Merseyside, struggling to revive its economy, pushing the idea of the free port, opposing factory closures, interceding with ministers over the chaotic local government situation, he was never more truly Liverpool's Archbishop than when he stood by its bedside and gravesides after Hillsborough. Although it came some years later, his highly unusual appointment, for a Catholic prelate, as a Companion of Honour in the New Year Honours of last December reflected in part the gratitude of the political world for the work he did at that time.

Derek Worlock appeared to have continued the practice of keeping a diary at least until his final illness. It contained, some private glimpses of the Second Vatican Council at work. It would not be uncharacteristic if some of his observations were extremely candid, though in his lifetime he protected his more intimate thoughts and rarely confided in others.

Worlock published a number of books, all except *Better Together* (1989), written with David Sheppard, devotional in tone. He edited two anthologies, *Take One at Bedtime* (1962) and *Turn and Turn Again* (1971). Each revealed him as a man not only of wide reading but as someone who himself possessed the ability to say profound things simply.

RONALD FLETCHER



Ronald Fletcher, radio broadcaster, died on February 6 aged 85. He was born on July 10, 1910.

RONALD FLETCHER was a BBC radio newsreader of the old school, the possessor of a well-modulated, light tenor reading voice which reminded one listener of a highly polished walnut table. Had it not been for an unhappy twist of fate, he might have made a successful transition to television. Instead, he will be remembered for presenting innumerable news bulletins and for reading the quotations on Radio 4's *Quote... Unquote* for almost two decades.

There was something of the gentleman amateur about Fletcher. He was not overtly ambitious, and work was done to finance his real loves of horse-racing and golf. On one occasion in 1963 he caused a wave of hysteria to ripple

through the studios when he forgot his appointment at the microphone altogether (he was having breakfast), leaving a flustered sub-editor to read the news bulletin. There was too, a little of the frustrated actor about him. He would occasionally suggest to Nigel Rees, the *Quote... Unquote* presenter, that he try reading a certain quotation in, say, a cockney accent. Rees would dissuade him from such excesses: the whole point of the joke was that Fletcher should sound like Fletcher.

The son of a chartered accountant, Ronald Fletcher inherited wealth from his grandfather, who owned coalmines in the North of England. After school days at Shrewsbury, he read English at Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

But he devoted more attention to the racetrack than to the iambic pentameter, and was sent down. The 1930s saw

voiced and great self-confidence, he joined the BBC. This was the late 1940s, and Fletcher was employed first on the Light Programme and then on the serious news bulletins of the old Home Service.

His fortunes improved dramatically when he joined up with the Canadian actor Bernard Braden. In 1950 Braden had launched his own radio series, *Breakfast with Braden*, followed by *Bedtime with Braden*. These were new, informal types of comedy show, and provided a showcase not only for glamorous personalities of the day, like Braden's wife Barbara Kelly, but for the talents of young writers such as Frank Muir and Denis Norden.

Fletcher was invited to read the endpieces to the shows. And while he could hardly be said to be a comedian in his own right — his announcements were written for him —

Back in civilian life, with no money but with a splendid

their success propelled him, incidentally, to a new level of celebrity. Afterwards he was asked to read for all sorts of light entertainment shows.

In the late 1960s Fletcher left the BBC's newsreading team in order to make a go of it in television. He appeared on *Twice a Fortnight* and on the new consumer programme *Braden's Week*. The latter ended abruptly in 1971, when Braden was sacked from the BBC after a row over his right to make commercials.

Esther Rantzen, who had started as a researcher for Braden's show, stepped in and began to work on a new show with a similar formula, *That's Life*. Again, the show's producer thought it would be a good idea to invite Fletcher to read the newspaper clippings, but because of an administrative error it was Cyril Fletcher who was approached about the job and who went on a long career on *That's Life*.

Ronald Fletcher's last post was as the resident reader of quotations in *Quote... Unquote*, 1976-94. He was perfect for the job, capable of bringing a lump to the throat of a listener one moment, and of making him laugh the next, without ever losing that dignified tone of delivery.

He married his first wife Terri in 1938. The marriage ended in divorce in 1958, and in 1959 he married Rita Dando. She survives him, together with their son and daughter, and the son and daughter of his first marriage.

He rejoined the BBC in 1969 and was adjutant of the 6th Battalion The Black Watch when it arrived in Tunisia in 1943 and took over command when its CO was mortally wounded on April 12. He was awarded the DSO for the bravery and flair with which he then conducted a series of hard battles. These culminated in the final dash across the base of Cap Bon which brought the war to an end on May 13, 1943.

Brian John George Madden was educated at Wellington, from where he went to Sandhurst in 1927. His father had died of wounds sustained in 1915 while commanding the 1st Battalion The Irish Guards, and he spent much of his youth with his mother's family, the Macpherson Grants of Ballindalloch. Here he learnt of his ancestor, William Grant, who in 1725 had raised one of the independent companies from which

The Black Watch was formed in 1739; he was commissioned into the regiment in 1928.

Sent to India with the 1st

Battalion he contracted a tropical disease and, judged medically unfit to serve overseas, he resigned his commission.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL BRIAN MADDEN



Lieutenant-Colonel Brian Madden, DSO, died on January 13 aged 87. He was born on December 1, 1908.

BRIAN MADDEN was second-in-command of the 6th (territorial) Battalion The Black Watch when it arrived in Tunisia in 1943 and took over command when its CO was mortally wounded on April 12. He was awarded the DSO for the bravery and flair with which he then conducted a series of hard battles. These culminated in the final dash across the base of Cap Bon which brought the war to an end on May 13, 1943.

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Sent to India with the 1st</p

THE TIMES TODAY

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9 1996

NEWS

Public pay freeze hits nurses

The Government angered public-sector workers by restricting nurses to a national pay award of 2 per cent and cutting back awards to a million others.

Britain's 480,000 nurses were told they would have to rely on local bargaining to secure more than 2 per cent. The Government added to their anger by declining to follow last year's practice of setting a target that nurses should be able to win from hospitals..... Pages 1, 8

Party leaders go to the country

The leaders of the main parties have jointly written to *The Times* to express support for the protection of the countryside. John Major, Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown, echo the language of a similar letter on May 8, 1929, signed by Stanley Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald and Lloyd George. Pages 1, 17

Hindley plea

Myra Hindley, the Moors Murderer, should be considered for transfer to an open prison after serving 30 years in a succession of high and medium security jails, says the Parole Board..... Page 1

Dearer prescriptions

Prescription charges are to rise by 25p to £5.50p from April, an increase of nearly 5 per cent, the Government announced..... Page 1

Benefits storm

A political storm erupted over Government plans to cut social security running costs by 25 per cent, with predictions that up to 20,000 jobs would go..... Page 2

Actress's triumph

Josie Lawrence, the comedian who began her career in working-men's clubs, has won an award for her Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*..... Page 3

\$1,000,000 question

Joan Collins took a verbal mauling in the witness stand in a \$4 million breach of contract case with her former publisher. Earlier, she confessed that she had spent the \$1.2 million advance that is at the root of the dispute..... Page 3

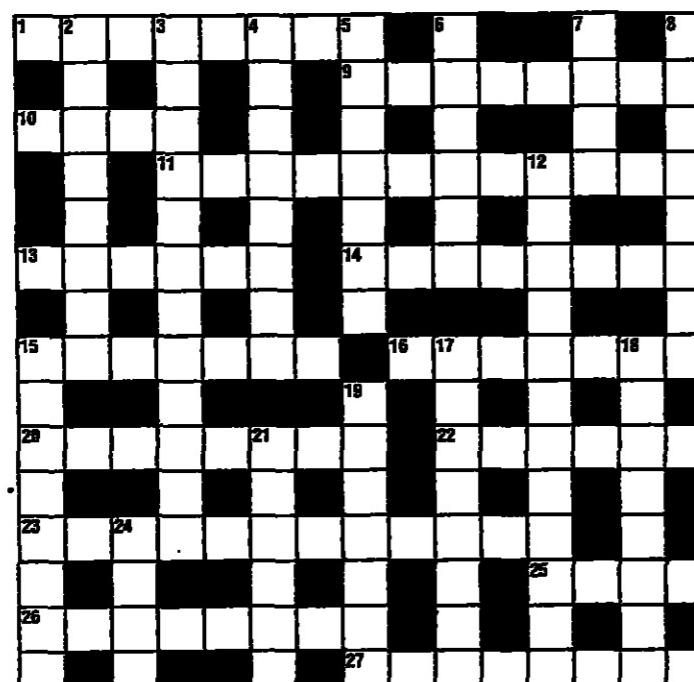
Canoe man freed

The managing director of an activities centre, jailed for the manslaughter of the four young victims of the Lyme Bay canoeing disaster, is to be freed..... Page 5

Tory hopeful takes to the air

Young Tory bloods will stop at nothing to win the chance of a Commons seat. But few spend £1,000 to hire a helicopter to beat the driving snow and appear before two selection meetings during the same evening. John Bercow, special adviser to Virginia Bottomley, did that when he was invited to meetings at Surrey Heath, and Buckingham..... Page 1

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,086



ACROSS

- Pull back — space is place reserved for officers (8).
- A spool about endless money could get one hooked (8).
- Tree with sap acceptable to people? Just the opposite (4).
- Courted lover runs away from writer (2-10).
- As joke, clear basket (6).
- Understand place to eat is within one's reach (8).
- Judge in Israel had robe altered (7).
- State team captain initially an American (7).
- Falls, having a problem seeing (8).
- Indian poet volunteers to shed blood (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,085

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Penzance, Cornw., 11C (82F); lowest day temp: Spadeadam, North Cumbria, 0.6C (32F); highest rainfall: Manchester, 10.5mm (0.4in); highest sunshine: Bognor Regis, West Sussex, 8.4hr

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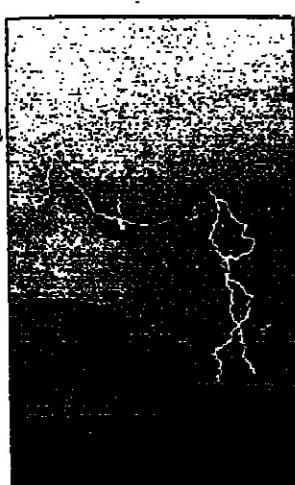
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BOOKS



Libby Purves and the weird side of the weather

Page 13

PLUS: Andrew Roberts on the NCR jury, page 12

SHOPPING



Romance ratings for Valentine presents

Page 7

PLUS: shopping in style in Paris, page 8

OUTDOORS



The quest to create 1,000 village greens

Page 15

PLUS: a sailor and his engine, page 15

TRAVEL



Paris: dreamy days in the city of love

Pages 18, 19

PLUS: a honeymoon relived, page 17

WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10 1996

HOW TO HIT A PUBLISHER FOR MILLIONS



Four million bucks for two books!" exclaimed an elderly man in a corridor outside the Manhattan court where Joan Collins this week entered a legal battle with her publisher. The old New Yorker whistled in wonder: "Who does she think she is? Shakespeare?"

The case of Random House (UK) & Random House Inc v. Gemini Star Productions Ltd & Joan Collins has blown the bonnet off the publishing world. Book commissioning and editing, once seen as cardigan-and-cocoa occupations, have been unveiled as

complex, brutal, zappy affairs. Thanks to Joan Collins we have seen the big-cigar decisions modern publishers take, the highly complex discussions which must take place before a word of a novel is written.

Miss Collins, less acclaimed as a writer than her sister Jackie, was offered \$4 million (about £2.6 million) not because she could turn a pretty sub-clause but because she is a movie star. People know her. Aged 62, she still exudes that ineffable fragrance of *eau de grandeur*, perfected over decades in showbusiness. Her arrival on Tuesday morning at the drab courthouse just

By Quentin Letts

south of Manhattan's Chinatown was an event in itself. When she alighted from her car she flashed her teeth and let her earrings glint under the flashbulbs of the paparazzi. Summoning her thespian powers she declared that Random House had been — a swallow for dramatic effect — had been, well, "cruel". She claimed to be speaking up "for many other authors" and voiced her confident expectation of victory.

It was superstar stuff but little else would

do. Random House, one of the great powers of publishing, is peev'd to a high degree. It is dissatisfied with the manuscript Miss Collins delivered for one of the books, *A Ruling Passion*, she agreed to write for \$4 million, and it wants the return of \$1.2 million it paid as an advance. The court heard the Collins pros described as "very primitive, dated, dull, clichéd". She is countering for the balance of the \$4 million, arguing that it is no matter whether the work was dreadful or not. What matters is that it was a "complete" manuscript, as demanded in her contract.

Despite the vast sums she was receiving,

Miss Collins expected detailed attention from her editors. Her lawyer, Kenneth Burrows, said that she was accustomed to intensive "face-to-face, line-by-line, page-by-page" editorial help. It was not given.

This sort of assistance is the norm for celebrity authors. Lord Archer takes close advice from experienced book editors when composing his commercial masterpieces. The routine is exhausting. Editors suggest alterations, help the author to improve descriptive passages, make dialogue more convincing.

Continued on page 3, col 1

Choose your weapon.



Don't forget Valentine's Day is next Wednesday, February 14th.

Call Free 0500 434343



GARDENING

PETER TREACHER

GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q I have a large yew hedge. Can you tell me if cuttings can be used in a medicinal way and who to approach about collecting them? — Ms E. Wallis, Crossways, Dorset.

A Yew clippings can be used in cancer research and there are several companies that collect them. There is even a small payment per kilogram for the clippings. Companies are interested in relatively small amounts, even a couple of large bin-liners full.

There are certain things you need to know before collection. For instance, clippings must be kept cool. Small amounts can be spread out in a shady place but large heaps will heat up like compost, so some firms supply special sacks, complete with a fan to push air into the centre of the sack. Collection should follow quickly after cutting.

Some firms offer different prices according to the quality of the clippings, ranging from clean, feathery clippings to twiggier stuff. Most are not interested in anything of more than pencil thickness.

Q Large quantities can fetch 50p per kilogram. For collection, contact: Friendship Estates, Old House Farm, Stubbs Walden, Doncaster DN6 9BU (01302 700220); Philippe Wandy, PO Box 118, Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 0EL (01243 545455); Yew Clippings Ltd, Milton Mill, West Milton, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3SN (01308 435693).

Q Our problem plant is *Yucca gloriosa*, Adam's needle, which blooms too late in the year, at Christmas. Can you suggest a way to cure this? — Mr J. Norman, Lincoln.

A With leaves as sharp as a yucca's around, who can blame Adam for wanting to stitch together a loincloth? Yuccas are fabulous in bloom, but that 6ft white candle is always late. In a cold garden, it pays to plant it against a south wall to speed nature along, or to plant the smaller but earlier *Yucca filamentosa*.

Q Some years ago we took over a garden in which somebody had planted grape hyacinths.

The things are spreading like a plague, and thrive on weed killers such as Roundup and Tumbleweed, and, when they have spread into gravel paths, shrug off PathClear and even sodium chloride. Any ideas? — Dr M.D. Begley, Frome, Somerset.

A A pretty blue, but insidious, aren't they? Muscari grow from a small white bulb, producing lots of bulbils every year as well as seedlings. They spread like mad, by fork and hoe and mouse and mole. Think hard before introducing them into an area of close gardening, however pretty they may look as an edging.

Growing them on a grassy bank solves the problem. Removing them from a border is difficult because, like celandines, their bulbils are so numerous that it is almost impossible to dig them up. Attempts at serious digging usually let some bulbs drop even lower into the soil, making them harder still to eradicate. Heavy shade stops them flowering but will not kill them except over many, many years. However, you might smother them into insignificance with a heavy herbaceous ground cover.

Where the bulbs are in empty soil, you might try removing and sterilising the soil. What a job! Where they are among the roots of shrubs, persevere with the Roundup (glyphosate) but be sure to bruise the leaves first and add washing-up liquid to the spray to make sure it does not run off the shiny leaves. There are many things which glyphosate takes several applications to kill, and bulbs are one of them. In gravel, sodium chloride will work, even if the bulbs have sufficient energy reserves to produce several death throes.

• Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

.

The best thing you can do for a new garden, and sometimes the hardest thing, is simply to look at it. Not to rush out and start doing things, but just to look, and think.

When I moved into my new house near Saffron Walden in Essex in December it snowed a little and then, without a breath of wind, froze for a week. All I could do was look.

Then the birds arrived. The children had hung peanuts in an old apple tree outside the kitchen window and the word got around that there was a free meal. Numbers were few at first, perhaps because the garden had been inhabited previously by a couple of rough-and-tumble dogs, but soon there was all the usual cast of garden birds, plus greenfinches and treecreepers. Below them, a posse of pheasants patrolled the lawn, as if with arms behind their backs, and pretended not to be eating the fallen peanut skins.

But waiting gets you down. After the thaw, I started to spend half hours standing about in the garden, hatching

plots and plans. Mine is not a huge garden, but quite big enough. Most of the plot lies to the back of the house, on the east side, in a rectangle 80ft by 110ft. Beyond my boundary is a neighbour's field, and then a row of tall pines along the edge of a stream. If these were thinned now, a few would stand a chance of becoming grand old pines with broad heads.

In my garden there is a good matrix of trees around open lawn, and on these might hang the future garden design. Two big, mature, flowering cherries flank the south side. They will be a powerful sight when in flower, and there is no point planning much else nearby until spring shows what colours they will be. Will they be white? Will they be pink? (Of course they will.) Will the buds take all the buds every year and the trees never flower? If so, they will go, because cherries are greedy, shallow-rooted trees and worthwhile only in a small garden if they perform.

Dead ahead centre, against the bottom fence, is a 20ft horse chestnut, which I take to

be the ordinary white one. If it were the pink form, there would be a circular scar around the trunk, where the pink scion was grafted on to the plain stock. I would prefer it to be the white form or, better still, the late-flowering Indian horse chestnut, *Aesculus indica*, which has beautiful glossy leaves.

In time, the horse chestnut will make a good tree and a powerful focus for the bottom of the garden. But if you plant a large, greedy tree as a focus in a small garden, there is always the problem of how to handle the dry, rooty space underneath, where nothing wants to grow. On the other hand, you can encourage horse chestnuts right down to ground level.

My tree is planted hard against the fence and, in time, it is a big tree, half of it will be hanging over my neighbour's land. It will be in my way. Perhaps it should go now. It is, after all, the most important place in the whole garden, and getting this right quickly would be most valuable. But no, give it a year and see what the tree does for the garden in summer. (Suddenly,

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GARDENING

Making a modern medieval garden

Garden historian Sylvia Landsberg has designed Queen Eleanor's scented bower.

The beautiful 15th-century French manuscript shown right is one of the sources that I used to design a garden that would soften the austere Great Hall in Winchester, the only remaining building of Henry III's 13th-century castle.

The original idea came from the Hampshire Gardens Trust, which proposed that a royal pleasure garden of around the same period as the castle be re-created. In 1986 Hampshire County Council built the garden, and it is now open to the public.

The garden is named after the queens of Henry III and his son Edward I – Eleanor of Provence and Eleanor of Castile respectively. They were the first queens in this country to have a recorded interest in gardens. Eleanor of Castile even arranged to pay for her Moorish gardeners to return to Aragon on her death, in 1290. It may have been through the queen's continental background that the brightest stars of the medieval herbaceous border, such as pot marigolds, wallflowers, lavender and the hollyhock, were introduced to England.

Queen Eleanor's Garden as a whole – as opposed to the bower garden illustrated above – is a narrow triangle, some 10yd x 30yd, typical in size and shape of the tiny



The flower-filled bower, left, created as part of Queen Eleanor's Garden in Winchester, was based on this 15th-century French illustration. The whole garden is packed with flowers and ornaments

castle gardens of the time, which were wedged between buildings. It is also similar in size and position to many private London gardens and, like many small, modern ones, it is packed with flowers and ornaments in the upright as well as the horizontal plane. A bronze falcon perches atop a hand-carved stone fountain, a water channel trickles through the garden, and there are stone and wooden benches, with decorations copied from local contemporary garden features. A rose and vine-covered arbour leads towards the enclosed flower bower where a medieval queen might have retired to play chess or sew.

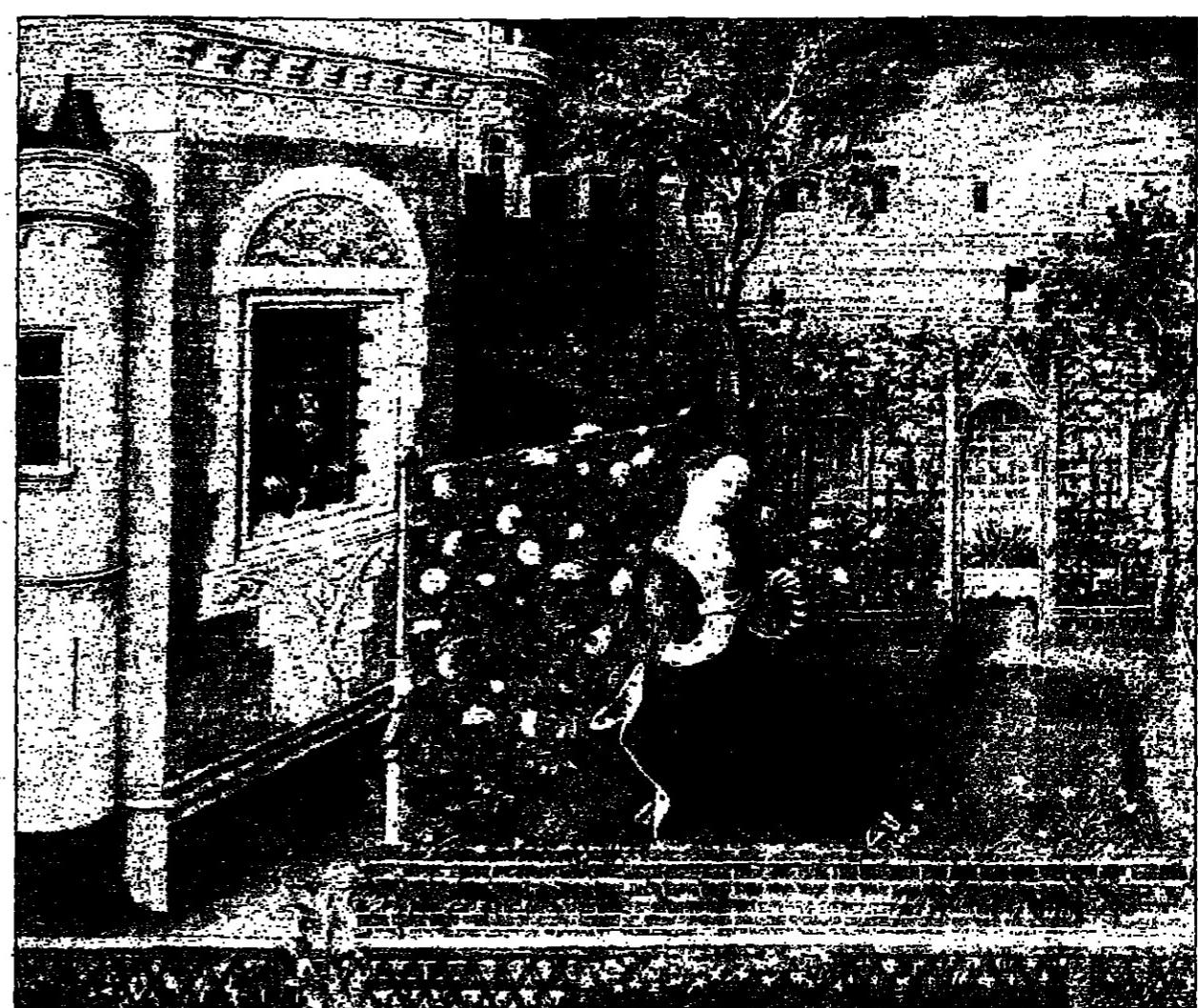
This is the part of the garden illustrated above, and it is typical of the period. At all levels of medieval society there

would be some corner in a garden in which to sit and perhaps eat or drink. The style would range from rough banks and a crude trestle table in a peasant garden, to a high level of carpentry in a royal or aristocratic garden.

The medieval painting shows a turf bench surrounding a turf "carpet", the whole probably enclosed by a low brick wall. Planted in a bed built into the top of one wall is a border luxuriant with red and white pinks, taller single carnations and probably marjoram. In the larger surrounding garden, not shown, other scented plants, such as lavender and stocks, complete the olfactory picture. On three sides of the bower garden the backs of the turf seats are planted with red and white roses. *Rosa gallica officinalis*

and *Rosa alba* – now known as the roses of Lancaster and York. Although the method is not visible, these roses are either interwoven into, or tied back onto, the trellises. The back of the enclosure is completed by the vines on the sides of the tunnel arbour.

Elaborately carved posts support diagonal and square-patterned trelliswork. At the



French medieval illustration

FACT FILE

• Based on The Medieval Garden, by Sylvia Landsberg, British Museum Press, £12.99. Available February 12, 1996.

• Queen Eleanor's Garden is open daily from 10am-5pm but is best visited from April to early July. (Queen Eleanor's Garden, Great Hall, the Castle, Winchester, Hants.) Admission free.

• The author is a garden historian, designer and lecturer who specialises in 12th to 17th century style gardens, 118 Highfield Lane, Southampton, SO17 1NP.

tion has been re-created to a size of 10yd x 5yd. The turf seats were constructed from stacks of turves to a height of about 20in, infilled with soil behind, used to grow the plants. All this is contained within a low wall of limestone blocks. The seats were originally newly fronted each autumn with pegged-on turves. It has been difficult to prevent these from drying out, and one wonders if they were created for short visits only – a Chelsea flower show effect.

The garden trelliswork is made from 3in x 3in square oak posts, onto which a square trellis of conifer poles is nailed. The archway is topped by a gold-leaved ball and heraldic shield displaying the quartered devices of Eleanor's father, King of Leon and Castile, which she was enti-

tled to use – gold castileon red, purple lion on white. These were copied from her gilded tomb in Westminster Abbey.

The garden has the same species of rose – Lancaster and York – as in the illustration. Careful pruning prevents the onset of rust.

Pinks and carnations cannot be grown since these did not reach England until the end of the 15th century. Instead, yellow wallflowers and native cowslips for spring are alternated in the summer with single pot marigolds – *Calendula officinalis* and little native pansy, *Viola tricolor*, with winter savory for scent.

There are many reasons why one would not wish to transform a present-day private garden into one of medieval style. Short flowering periods, floppy plants, proneness to rust and mildew, late opening of vine buds, to name a few. However, some features described here can look well in a modern garden, and a chapter in my book (details left), explains some of the techniques.

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SHOPPING

7

Putting the Roman back into romance

Jill Parkin tests a selection of Valentine presents to see if they succeed in setting your beloved's pulse racing

The Roman fertility festival of Lupercalia is just days away and there's not a wolfskin to be had anywhere. Not for love or money. First the sacrificing of dogs was outlawed, then wolves became extinct in Britain, which made running about in their skins tricky. Finally, public thonging of women lost some of its political correctness. Eventually Valentine's Day took over — and it's all about love and money.

Instead of enjoying a good old fertility festival, we send an out-of-season red rose with a weak neck that breaks after a day or two. Who was St Valentine anyway? He has been omitted from the calendar of saints, as probably non-existent. He has survived only because his alleged martyrdom day falls a day before Lupercalia.

Be conventional on the 14th if you wish, but purists should reclaim their day with something Roman. Examining the entrails of a dog for omens may be going a bit far, but there's no reason why you shouldn't shuck an oyster or 12 and examine their innards with a loved one. Half a dozen of the aphrodisiac bivalves will cost £13.50 at Wheelers in London and Brighton or £3.95 at the Magpie Cafe in Whitley.

Today's Antonys might fancy giving asses milk to their Cleopatras, but will probably have to settle for a bathful of goat or sheep milk instead. That could be pricey. Harrods charges £1.10 and £1.30 a pint.

If you'd die for your love, send him a CD of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and hope he arrives with several gallons of sheep's milk to douse your funeral pyre before it gets too warm.

If your sweetheart is literary-minded, remember the Romans were good on erotica. Whatever your sexual preference, *Canillus Poems*, Penguin Classics, £6.99, and Ovid (*The Erotic Poems*, Penguin Classics, £8.99) will have done it and commemorated it in verse.

I've always wanted a man to buy me packets of seeds of all Shakespeare's flowers. He could plant them in a Bard border, and I could trip among them muttering about roses for remembrance and pansies for thoughts. If you like the idea, but not the digging, go for the book — *Shakespeare's Flowers*. Royal Shakespeare Company, £4.99 — telephone orders 01799 296860.

Underwear is a tricky one. The shops I rang all said: "Something red for Valentine's Day." I think red is tarty, but men call it passionate. Only to be embarked on if you know your love really well.

For a cheeky variation on the chocolate theme, try Chocolate Body Paint (BHS, £3.50). It's for spreading on ice-cream, bread or bodies. Not to be mixed with expensive underwear.

You could actually use the line "Come up and see my etchings" if you had one of the heart designs by Jenny Tappin waiting for your sweetheart. The tiny, hand-coloured etchings range from £1.50 to £19.50. Ring 01377 247865 for details.

If you have the money to shop at Cartier (0171-493 6962), and yet would like to keep tabs on your investment, their gold love bangle (from £2,600) may be for you. It has to be put on by the giver and comes complete with a safety chain.

Lupercalia was still on my mind when I asked our Valentine testing panel to check out a few of this year's gifts. "Send me a young man in a wolfskin," I cried. Instead, I got Perry Cleveland-Peck, an editorial assistant at *The Times*, in a silk shirt.

Our panel consisted of Perry, 25, my husband, 53; my stepdaughter, 16, and me, 37. In all cases, our judgment may have been distorted by consumption of too many chocolates.

Moss Teddy Bear. Fizzroy's, £35 (0171-722 1066). Next-day delivery in London. Allow up to a week for the rest of the UK. With regular watering the bear could last three years.

JP: When I first saw him I wasn't sure, but he's growing on me... Husband: He's very good, but I'd be rather worried if someone gave him to me. Who was that chap in *Brideshead*? I'd only give it to someone who was mad about bears. And I don't think I'd want to be involved with a woman who was mad about them.

PC-P: He's fantastic. I'd definitely buy him for my girlfriend. I'd be pleased to be given him too. (Perry and Teddy left the testing together.)

Sweet 16: He's fun. He doesn't scream "commitment" at you. Non-threatening.

Heart rate — 5 out of 5. But only for the young ones. And isn't three years of watering a commitment?

▼ HEART-SHAPED CALCULATOR

Fenwicks, £13.50. Available by mail order on 0171-629 9161. With jewel-encrusted keys.

JP: I haven't got the self-confidence to like something that vulgar.

Husband: Does it play a tune?

PC-P: For teenagers — but it's tacky.

Sweet 16: I actually know someone with one of these. Not for me. I suppose if you put it on your desk it tells the world you've had a Valentine.

Heart rate — 1. My three-year-old fell for it but her idea of a Valentine is Thomas the Tank Engine.

▼ FLOWERS FOR A MAN

Interflora, £30 — telephone number is 0500 43 43 43. Our florist came up with a burst of red and yellow — sunflowers, amaryllis, and carnations, backed up with eucalyptus and willow. It was the hit of the testing, even with my husband, who had complained about the smell of some hyacinth flowers the day before.

JP: Just right for a man. Nothing droopy or Victorian about this. No ribbons, no scent. Given to a woman, it wouldn't be romantic, but this would knock a chap over without being cloying.

Husband: Almost shockingly good. It's in a water-bag, so you don't have the fuss of having to arrange it. I'd just plonk the whole thing in the salad bowl. If you had this in your flat and a mate came round, you wouldn't be embarrassed. Just the job. Not smelly, either.

PC-P: I'd be really flattered if a woman sent me flowers. No problem with that at all. These make a good splash.

Sweet 16: I'm not really into flowers. It's quite a heavy thing to send someone.

Heart rate — 5. Ask your florist for a "good splash".

▼ LOVE ME, LOVE ME NOT CUFFLINKS

White enamel cufflinks with small red hearts, one broken. Sackville and Jones from Fenwicks, £14.95. Available by mail order on 0171-629 9161.

JP: I've never bought a man cufflinks. These are quite jolly. Small and not flashy.

Husband: They're witty. I'd wear them.

PC-P: I'd be quite thrilled with these. Cufflinks are a great idea.

Sweet 16: Pass.

Heart rate — 4.

▼ AMOR VINCIT OMNIA PICTURE FRAME

Metal gilt-embossed frame, 4in x 3in with small heart-shaped cut-out for photograph. Modulus from Fenwicks, £23.95. Available by mail order on 0171-629 9161.

JP: It's good and heavy but it doesn't improve with time.

Husband: Hideous.

PC-P: It's OK, nice and weighty. I like it more than when I first saw it.

Sweet 16: Not at all.

Heart rate — 2.

▼ HEART AND BIRDS WALL HANGING

Red plaster heart, 6in high, with two lovebirds perched on top. Liberty, £9.95. Mail order: 0171-734 1234.

JP: I like this. It may be heart-shaped but it looks a bit rough-hewn, almost



Romeo and Juliet would probably opt for the traditional love tokens of flowers and chocolates, but you could try the moss teddy bear from Fitzroy's, £35

distressed, which stops it being naff.

Husband: I like it more than I did at first. In the right place it would be fine; there aren't many right places.

PC-P: I've been to houses full of things like this. It's good.

Sweet 16: It's worse than the picture frame. It looks like a decoration from a house in Neighbours.

Heart rate — 3.

▼ CHARBONNEL ET WALKER CHOCOLATES

Heart-shaped box with I Love You or other message in gold-wrapped chocolates, £24 for 28oz or heart-shaped chocolates in hand-made fabric box, £20 for a quarter of a pound. Available by mail order on 0171-491 0939.

JP: The little hand-made box is lovely. If it's an established relationship, this is the one.

Husband: No. Go for quantity. The big box is the one. The I Love You message is irrelevant. The heart-shaped box registers with you and you can't wait to tear into the chocolates.

PC-P: They're beautiful and sexy. I'd prefer these to underwear any time.

Husband: A bit different. Quite a strong message — not for someone you've just met at the bus-stop.

PC-P: A lovely romantic gesture.

Sweet 16: Almost as good as the chocolates.

Heart rate — 4.

PC-P: The small box would be better for someone you want to woo. It's subtle. The big one is for an established relationship. You expect to share those on the sofa. The little box is just enough for one.

Sweet 16: Love the chocolates. It's a schmaltzy idea, but who's going to complain?

Heart rate — 4.

▼ BED CUSHIONS

Heavily embroidered cushions, 14in x 14in, with Shakespearean quotes from *Midsummer Night's Dream* or *Romeo and Juliet*. Royal Shakespeare Company, 01789 296860. *Titania*, £15.99; *Romeo and Juliet*, £16.99.

JP: They're beautiful and sexy. I'd prefer these to underwear any time.

Husband: A bit different. Quite a strong message — not for someone you've just met at the bus-stop.

PC-P: A lovely romantic gesture.

Sweet 16: Almost as good as the chocolates.

Heart rate — 4.

▼ HAND-MADE CARDS FROM THE RSC

Royal Shakespeare Company, 01789 296860. Printed with hearts and a romantic quotation from Shakespeare, £2.85 or £10 for four; also from *Liberty*, £3.95.

JP: I think these are adorable. Mass-produced cards can be dreadful unless you get those "blank for your own message" ones.

Husband: They're almost a present in themselves. Though it's rather playing the field to buy four in a pack, isn't it?

PC-P: I like this idea. It shows you've given the person some thought.

Sweet 16: Exactly. It's much nicer than just grabbing something off the shelf.

Heart rate — 5.

● Costumes: Angels & Bermans 0171-826 5628. Flowers: Paula Poole 0171-827 3373 for Interflora. Shot at The Peacock House, Addison Road, Holland Park, London, with thanks to the Richmond Fellowship.

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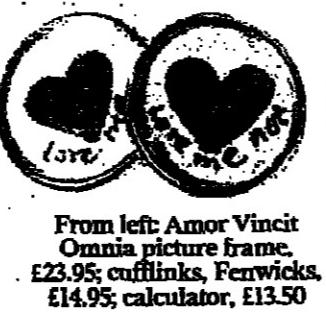
SLTA1

for people who love to cook

Hearts and flowers — variations on a theme



Above, from left: bed cushions, £15.99; hand-made cards, £2.84 (or £10 for four) from the Royal Shakespeare Company; heart and birds wall hanging, Liberty, £9.95



From left: Amor Vincit Omnia picture frame, £23.95; cufflinks, Fenwicks, £14.95; calculator, £13.50



Juliet with Charbonnel et Walker chocolates, £34 for 28oz box

PROPERTY

The not so bare necessities of ambassadorial life



Nice place, smart area, in-and-out drive — ambassadorial necessities in Courtenay Avenue, Highgate, north London, for sale at £1,450,000

Diplomatic relations on millionaires' row

The estate agents' description "ambassadorial residence" is becoming if London what "baronial haik was to the country. Many substantial houses for sale in the capital are being deemed suitable dwellings for diplomats in the same way that rurapiles were elevated to aristocratic status. But what constitutes an ambassadorial residence?

A fine place to start would be in Courtenay Avenue, in Highgate, north London. The road runs parallel to what is said to be London's most expensive residential street. The Bishop's Avenue, the domain of the very rich, who occasionally rest their jet-lagged heads there.

Courtenay Avenue has the benefit of being a cul-de-sac, no through traffic to the North Circular never ever disturbs sleep or intrudes on privacy. Admittedly, the avenue is second best, but it is not without its chandelier.

Our example (above) is No. 7, which is for sale at £1,450,000 through the agents Keith Carle Groves. The house has five reception rooms, a Gothic chapel, extensive garden, four bedrooms, a guest suite, games room, staff flat and a large driveway. Impressive for visas, and the occasional noisy demonstration. He lost his bane.

Chris Underhill, the manager of KCG's Highgate office says: "For a start, there are six or seven ambassadors' residences in the road." The house is presently occupied by a diplomat and the road is a low-profile and secure environment. Should there be an official function, temporary barriers can be erected to control access. And, of much importance to diplomats, it has an in-and-out driveway.

"The house is large enough to entertain at least 200 people. It's also near the centre of London, yet far enough north of Whitehall to hear the birds tweeting in the morning," says Mr Underhill.

There are many aspects, then, for a diplomat to consider.

Mr. Ambassadors have to have parties in properties that bring kudos, for which an ordinary semi or a public room in a hotel will not suffice.

But there are houses elsewhere that seem uncomfortable with their new role.

Last November,

The Times Diary reported that residents in Kensington Court Gardens, southwest London, were miffed because the Belorussians had been granted planning permission to convert a house into an embassy.

With an ambassadorial flat over the shop. Opposition

came from, among others, Sir Ronald Arculus, a former British ambassador to Italy.

Wishing to keep his part of Kensington as residential as possible, he complained that the embassy and residence would cause traffic congestion, a shortage of parking spaces, queues for visas, and the occasional noisy demonstration.

He lost his bane.

Holland Park, west London, is the latest to experience a new diplomatic invasion. The Uzbekis, Belarusians and Ukrainians are opening embassies and residences there, and some of their reluctant neighbours are displaying signs of nimbyism.

Others are less convinced that diplomatic neighbours are a problem. Willy Gehring, who runs Property Vision, which buys houses in central London, says that such complaints "don't hold much sway". He speaks from personal experience. "I was near a number of residences and embassies when I was living in Holland Park," he says.

According to Richard Crossthwaite, of the agents Knight



£3.95 million would buy this house in Hamilton Terrace, St John's Wood

police patrolled our roads more than they would if the diplomats hadn't been there. It was a boon. I even used to leave my briefcase in the back of my car at night. As far as I'm concerned, God bless the diplomats — and anybody complaining needs their head examined."

But play the poor ambassador. He or she is obliged to find a property that suits their country's needs without raising the national debt. A typical budget for a suitable London residence would need to be between £1.5 million for a relatively low-key diplomatic presence, to £5 million for creating a big splash.

Ideally, the residence should be within the existing watch of the Diplomatic Protection Group (DPC), concentrated mainly in Holland Park, Kensington, Mayfair and Belgravia.

However, the South Korean ambassador is rather fond of his Wimbledon residence, and the protection group is obliged to provide protection wherever the residence is located.

Guy Walters

• Keith Carle Groves, 0181-341 6666, Property Vision, 0171-523 8388, Knight Frank, 0181-431 8886; Mayfair, 0171-429 8771; Chesterfield, 0771-587 5234.

Frank, gardens and in-and-out driveways are features that the ambassadors must have. "Such attributes are particularly useful for really big functions," he says, "especially on the country's national day of celebration." But there are few properties of this sort within Mayfair and Belgravia that haven't already been snapped up by diplomats, and this is why so many official residences are starting to appear in areas such as St John's Wood and Highgate.

In St John's Wood, Knight Frank is offering a three-storey house in tree-lined Hamilton Terrace at £3.95 million with an 89-year unexpired lease. The white stucco-fronted, detached, eight-bedroom house has a large landscaped rear garden and plant room, separate staff flat, driveway, video entry and security system, but does lack spacious reception rooms.

For ambassadors on a more limited budget, Knight Frank is offering a freehold house in Highgate with seven bedrooms, an in-and-out driveway and a 12ft garden at £1.4 million.

Those with a large house to sell in central London may be tempted to believe that theirs could be described as "ambassadorial". And they could be right. Brian D'Arcy Clark, of the agents Chesterfield, stipulates that "Much of the accommodation can be modest, but the reception rooms have to be large. The space can vary from 3,000sq ft to 18,000sq ft. Freehold is preferred, and the property has to be in good condition, or requiring only a few minor alterations."

Failing that, if you have a little place tucked away in the Home Counties, why not put it up for sale as a "consular cottage"? Even diplomats need weekends away.

GUY WALTERS

• Keith Carle Groves, 0181-341 6666, Property Vision, 0171-523 8388, Knight Frank, 0181-431 8886; Mayfair, 0171-429 8771; Chesterfield, 0771-587 5234.

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LONDON (below)
5 Essex Villas, W8. Victorian semi-detached house with garden on the Philmore Estate, close to Kensington High Street. Six bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite), dressing room, child's study, en suite shower-room, two cloakrooms, drawing room, library, dining room, kitchen, utility room and kitchenette. About £1,675,000 for a 69-year lease. (John D. Wood, 0171-277 0705).



GLOUCESTERSHIRE (above)
38 Priory Street, Cheltenham. Semi-detached Regency house with garden. Five bedrooms, two bathrooms, two shower-rooms, two cloakrooms, two reception rooms, billiard room, kitchen and storage vault. About £150,000. (Hamptons, 01242 222909).

CHERYL TAYLOR

PROPERTY

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Quick and the dread

■ RUDE GIRLS
By Vanessa Walters
Pan, £3.50

VANESSA WALTERS is a sassy-looking, black 18-year-old author from north London who is already at work on her second novel. To judge from her debut, *Rude Girls*, it too will be tightly plotted, with a good ear for dialogue, a slightly enervating propensity to list every item of clothing her heroines are wearing and a moral-happy denouement five pages from the end.

Things move along with enough bounce and vigour to satisfy the teenage readers this is aimed at — Yardie's daughter Shree, single mum Paula and upwardly-mobile Janice have been best friends "since the beginning of time" and look for relief from the white-out over of London summer in all-day festivals and endless mutual hair-dressing sessions. Things start to go pear-shaped when Shree's dad shoots a business associate in the middle of a drug deal and the three girls are bound up in a revenge attack.



Walters: bounce and vigour

Further pressure is put on the friendship by Shree's lust for a dodgy Yardie who always turns up at the most inopportune times in a large black Mercedes and "accidentally" smogs her just as the plot needs a fight or an argument. Meanwhile, Paula forges more independence from her domineering mother and Janice has a run-in with a smarmy yuppie in the throes of denying his blackness.

While Walters displays unerring enthusiasm and a healthy disrespect for her male characters, her failings are all too apparent by the third chapter: stolid storytelling unrelied by those bursts of imagination and prose that mark out the truly gifted from the merely talented. Still, should her career as a novelist fail to take off, she has some interesting ideas about coiffure and should do well as a hairdresser.

CAITLIN MORAN

A member of the NCR Book Award panel, Andrew Roberts is confident of avoiding the acrimony that has dogged other prizes

When my car was stolen last December, driven to Stoke Newington and completely stripped, the thieves left only three articles: my green wellies, my wife's classical tapes and *The Architecture of Southern England* by John Norwich. Perhaps they already had a copy.

If so, I may recommend them another of Lord Norwich's works, *Byzantium: The Decline and Fall*, the third and final part of his great trilogy. It has been submitted, along with 144 other works of history, biography, travel and non-fiction for the NCR Book Award, of which I am one of the five judges.

When the judges met for the first time at AT&T's headquarters on the Marylebone Road in London just before Christmas, Jeremy Paxman, our chairman, set out a few very

welcome ground rules. We were not expected to read all 145 books but should each take away the 20 or so which most interested us. The prospect of being forced, for the first time since Eng Lit A level, to read all of a book I did not necessarily like therefore receded. Next month we will read each other's three or four favourites to create a shortlist. Our last meeting, to choose the winner, takes place in the hour or so before a huge dinner at the Dorchester on May 22.

The other ground rules — that we would not take into account how rich the winner is before awarding the £25,000 tax-free cheque, or

consider what other awards he or she might have won or narrowly missed — were also agreed on quickly. My whispered question about the ethics of taking away some books to give as presents to family and friends was answered by a magisterial wave of Paxman's hand. "Treat it like Christmas shopping without the money."

Under the aegis of the formidable Doti Irving, who runs the prize (formerly and henceforth called the NCR Book Award) for a decade, we finished quickly and left.

Whatever advertising executives may say to the contrary, I do not believe we remember advertise-

ments in newspapers. So literary awards do work in bringing the name of a company to public attention. For the price of two or three full-page advertisements in the national newspapers, AT&T can organise and pay for an award which will get its name into the all-important editorial as opposed to the advertising pages.

The winner gets a large cheque, the runners-up receive £3,000 each, the judges also receive a modest fee for their half-year retheadation, the company gets free advertising into diary stories and columns like this, the public gets the fruit of our deliberations and the literary world

gets fed at a grand dinner. Book awards are thus proof that sometimes capitalism can benefit everyone.

Having met the other judges — Cristina Odone, Nick Hornby and Sue Butterworth — I suspect I shall soon be feeling like the shrivelled and embarrassed little man in the Bateman cartoon at whom everyone in the cocktail party is staring and pointing. The caption shall read: "The man who served on an uncontroversial book award." I simply cannot see the five of us yelling or intriguing or playing the martyr when it comes to making our choices.

The Booker and Whitbread seem almost designed for these rows. With Julian Critchley and Rachel Cusk dashing off into print the moment the choice is made. Geordie Greig, book editor of *The Sunday Times*, has recently called into question the entire basis of the Whitbread selection process. Last year's AT&T, chaired by Alan Clark, which controversially plumped for a dismal autobiography rather than Juliet Baker's much-tipped and brilliant life of the Brontë family, was no exception. I predict this year the NCR award will be professional, dignified, serious, harmonious if not unanimous, and therefore instantly forgettable in the great saga of book-prize rows.

■ Andrew Roberts's novel *The Aachen Memorandum* is published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson

A most gentlemanly jury

The next time I see Paris

Jan Morris is captivated by a new, definitive guide to the City of Light that is good enough to eat

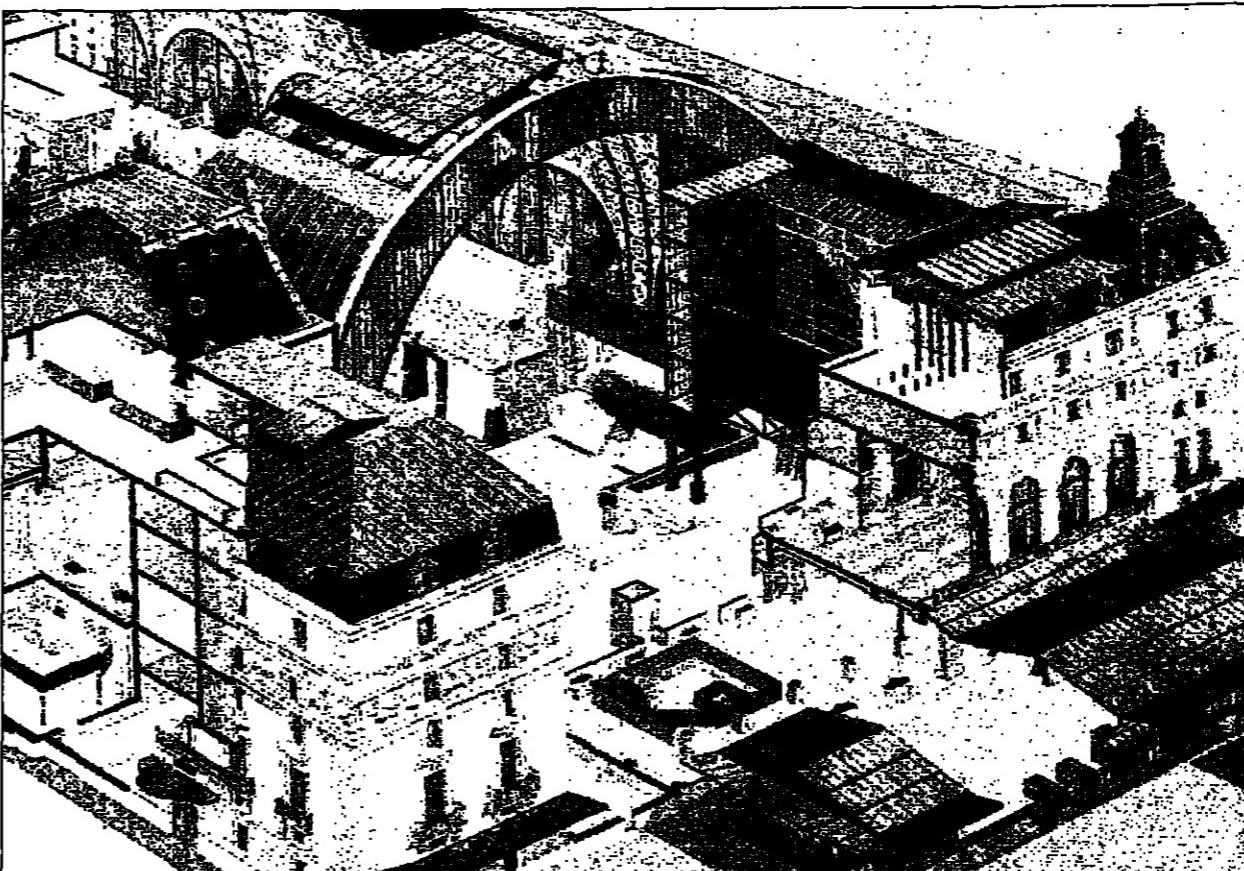
■ EVERYMAN GUIDE TO PARIS
Everyman, £16.99

look lovely. They are elegantly printed on rich, shiny paper. They are virtuous examples of the designer's and cartographer's craft, and they assume an adult interest in every aspect of a place.

Not all the Everymans concern cities — some are about countries or regions, and there is one about Parisian restaurants — but they are best suited to the discussion of a metropolis, and though Paris is by no means my favourite city, the Everyman *Paris* is as good an example of the series as any. It feels and smells so good that, rather than spend a small fortune on some hyped-up entrée in a concealed restaurant, I would eat it.

The range of the book is astonishing. I am not surprised that more than 200 advisers, authors, researchers, illustrators, designers and photographers are acknowledged at the front. It contains hundreds of architectural drawings and cutaways, from Roman Lutetia to La Défense. It discusses and illustrates street furniture, haute couture, gardens, wildlife, museums, women, department stores, the Seine and, of course, cuisine. There is a lovely portfolio of paintings by the great painters of the city. There is an anthology of quotations from writers as varied as Boswell, Joyce, Alice B. Toklas and Evelyn Waugh.

And there are also, though less satisfactorily, the conventional registers of a city guidebook: city walks delineated by monument by monument,



Inside story: cutaway illustration showing the structure of the Musée d'Orsay, from the *Everyman Guide to Paris*

lists of shops, hotels, restaurants ("not the place for a casual tourist, but for people who really understand food, such as the sophisticated Parisians who... came to taste the carpaccio of langoustines with caviare"). But these are the quibbles of a Welsh ascetic. If you love Paris, you will doubtless love this book, not as a transient aid to sightseeing or gourmandism, but as a reference book of great beauty and lasting fascination.

I am collecting all the Everyman city books, against the time when I can travel no more and they will come and sit with me beside the fire and be my memory's guide.

Travel, pages 18 and 19

AUDIOBOOKS

Eye on the ball

■ CLOUGH THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Written and read by Brian Clough

Corgi Audio, £8.99 (3 hours)
BRIAN CLOUGH has a good story to tell, though he stumbles over his words. He is a working-class hero, a gifted forward, a dedicated football team manager, and he never suffers a single moment's self doubt. One cannot help feeling that English soccer would have been infinitely more fun if Cloughie had run our national team for a spell.

■ PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES
By Brian Redhead; read by John Humphrys, Peter Holiday, Sue MacGregor and John Timson Reed Audio, £7.99 (3 hours)
AS THE main presenter of the *Today* programme, Brian Redhead was always a controversial broadcasting figure — Denis Thatcher used to refer to him as "the enemy". But

when he died there was an outpouring of national affection for him. This collection of his journalism since 1980 celebrates his wide interests, from history to marmalade, from religious belief to life up North and retirement. His erstwhile colleagues from *Today* read his work attentively, sometimes reverently.

■ MISSING JOSEPH
By Elizabeth George; read by Derek Jacobi Corgi Audio, £8.99 (3 hours)
AN unchallenging murder mystery starts with a meeting between a vicar and Deborah St James in front of the Leonardo cartoon of the Virgin and Child at the National Gallery. They both wonder where's Joseph? When Deborah and her husband visit the vicar, they find he is dead. Hints of witchcraft, violent sex and police corruption flesh out the Rendell-style mixture.

RUSSELL TWISK

TIMES BOOKS

THURSDAY
John Bayley on the mysteries of English grammar, and Richard Dawkins on Carl Sagan

Very heaven not to be young

■ LOSE THE DEMON IN THE EVE: The Challenge of Mid-Life
By Angela Neustatter Michael Joseph, £17.99

IT IS said that the fashion designer Calvin Klein, when playing a word-association game ad hearing the word "young" immediately snapped "forever". This would not endear him to Angela Neustatter, who believes in accepting the loss of youth without demur.

Do not put off her book by its subtitle, which contains two of the most off-putting words in the English language: challenge and mid-life. Neustatter is a mite earnest but shwishes engagingly and you end up feeling better about middle age, as I insist on calling it, than you did before.

Neustatter sees the time when children have grown up, partnerships have faded into the lumenum and career prospects are dwindling as a period when kicking over the traces might be permissible. Among her 150 interviewees are several who walked out on their commitments. A few of them now feel regret but, what the hell, it added to their personal growth. And most of them are happy that they listen to their body clock and were brave enough to make enormous changes at almost the last minute.

Neustatter does not underestimate the problems of the middle years — the possible loss of tow, libido and looks — as well as hurtful invisibility in the eye of the world that comes with the first grey hair. But she usefully sniffs out signs of changing times: more job opportunities for the middle-aged, because there are fewer young people; more notice taken of them by advertisers, not because they have suddenly fallen for mature allure but because of the dizzying statistic that the over-fifties probably own about 80 per cent of all the wealth in Britain". An example of this changed approach is that the supermarket chain that hired Lesley Joseph in her role of Doreen (the nymphomaniac of a certain age in the television sitcom *Birds of a Feather*) to star in its commercials saw sales zip through the roof.

Neustatter has sensible things to say about preparing for retirement — although some of them sound alarmingly hearty. She does not try to convince fiftysomethings that the best is yet to come but suggests the possibility of growing old without feeling that even one toe is already in the grave.

PENNY PERRICK

When is a shop not a shop?



Always on Page 2
and in Weekend Money

THIS WEEK'S TIMES AND BARCLAYS PREMIER OFFER

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Diazhilev: Creator of the Ballets Russes at the Barbican Art Gallery, London EC2
This is the first exhibition to comprehensively examine the achievements of the great Russian impresario Sergei Pavlovich Diazhilev (1872-1929), founder of the Ballets Russes, charting his versatile career chronologically until his eventual exile from Russia in 1914. It features over 300 works drawn from both public and private collections in Russia and the West, including some previously unseen in Britain.

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Daily 10am-6.45pm, Tue 10am-5.45pm,
Sun 12pm-6.45pm

Exhibition runs until April 14



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Sheffield: The Story of Sheffield at the Kelham Island Museum Alma Street, off Corporation Street Tel: 0114 272 2106 Mon-Thur 10am-4pm, Sun 1pm-4.30pm

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Passport holders entitled to two for one admission Pictureville, Bradford 01274 727 488

Screenings Tue-Sat 12 noon, 2pm, 4pm closed Mon (advance booking advised during half-term week 9-15 February). Showing until May 1996

THE TIMES

CHART WATCH

THIS week, Peter Høeg's *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* notches up one year in the paperback chart. Briefly nudged out by the Penguin and Phoenix 60p volumes, it has now clocked up the full 52 weeks. Good going for a novel whose success owes much to word of mouth but whose author's name is unpronounceable to all but his fellow Danes. The nearest contender is Sebastian Faulks's elegant war novel, *Birdsong*, with 45 weeks.

Meanwhile, Irvine Welshmania continues with both *Trainspotting* and *Acid House* showing strongly.

The end of the festive season is firmly signalled by the arrival of Rosemary Conley's *Complete Flat Stomach Plan* at No 17, and the end of the festive hangover by the reappearance, at No 16, of Malcolm Gluck's *Superplonk*.

HARDBACK

- | | Last No. | week weeks |
|--|----------|------------|
| 1 CROSS CHANNEL Julian Barnes (Cape) | £10.99 | 1 4 |
| 2 DELIA SMITH'S WINTER COLLECTION Delia Smith (BBC) | £15.99 | 2 16 |
| 3 THE GHOST ROAD Pat Barker (Viking) | £15 | 0 9 |
| 4 THE ROAD AHEAD Bill Gates (Viking) | £7.50 | 0 7 |
| 5 THE MOOR'S LAST SIGH Salman Rushdie (Cape) | £15.99 | 10 8 |
| 6 IMMEDIATE ACTION Andy McNab (Bantam) | £15.99 | 5 14 |
| 7 ENIGMA Robert Harris (Hutchinson) | £15.99 | 0 16 |
| 8 ELIZABETH Sarah Bradford (Heinemann) | £20 | 0 1 |
| 9 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (Bloomsbury) | £16.99 | 4 3 |
| 10 X-FILES BOOK OF THE UNEXPLAINED Vol 1 Jane Goldman (Simon & Schuster) | £15.99 | 3 13 |

PAPERBACK

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1 SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS David Guterson (Bloomsbury) | £5.99 | 3 20 |
| 2 THE RAINMAKER John Grisham (Arrow) | £5.99 | 0 1 |
| 3 THE STATE WE'RE IN Will Hutton (Vintage) | £7.99 | 1 5 |
| 4 BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM Kate Atkinson (Black Swan) | £5.99 | 6 4 |
| 5 TRAINSPOTTING Irvine Welsh (Minerva) | £6.99 | 0 23 |
| 6 REGENERATION Pat Barker (Penguin) | £5.99 | 7 12 |
| 7 THE JUROR George Dawes Green (Bantam) | £5.99 | 2 5 |
| 8 FREE TO TRADE Michael Ridpath (Mandarin) | £5.99 | 8 4 |
| 9 WRITING HOME Alan Bennett (Faber) | £7.99 | 16 15 |
| 10 THE EYE IN THE DOOR Pat Barker (Penguin) | £5.99 | 11 11 |
| 11 MISS SMILLA'S FEELING FOR SNOW Peter Høeg (Flamingo) | £5.99 | 18 52 |
| 12 A CELESTINE PROPHECY James Redfield (Bantam) | £7.99 | 17 12 |
| 13 BIRDSONG Sebastian Faulks (Vintage) | £5.99 | 0 45 |
| 14 BORROWED TIME Robert Goddard (Corgi) | £5.99 | 0 5 |
| 15 THE SHEEP-PIG Dick King-Smith (Puffin) | £3.50 | 20 2 |
| 16 SUPERPLONK 96 Malcolm Gluck (Coronet) | £4.99 | 0 6 |
| 17 COMPLETE FLAT STOMACH PLAN Rosemary Conley (Arrow) | £4.99 | 0 1 |
| 1 | | |



Wrap up
warm and
drive to
the limit
of taste

Page 10

CAR 96

How new
exhaust
tests have
plunged
into chaos

Page 2



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10 1996

My unforgettable One for the road

Tony Dodgins,
Grand Prix editor
of *F1 Racing*,
discovers what
F1 reality is like
behind the wheel

Tyrell's regular driver, Mike Salo, paced about like some expectant father. He was worried about "his baby", having all its limbs.

The Finnish Formula One ace had been smart enough to negotiate one of the 1995 cars for keeps at the end of its useful life — a moment that was seemingly fast approaching. The car was out there on a drenched Barcelona track in the hands of a journalist whose racing experience amounted to a season of endurance Pro Karting.

Now, Pros weigh around 100 kilos and are powered by two 5.5bhp Honda generator motors; a Tyrrell-Yamaha 023 weighs 500 kilos and has a monstrous 700bhp. A power-to-weight ratio roughly 13 times as great.

Crass, mindless stupidity or simply extreme folly? Could a mere mortal handle it? A man more used to climbing into a Sierra 4x4. A man whose painstaking preparation amounted to five laps of Barcelona in a Citroën Xanta Turbo Diesel the day before ... in the dark?

Ken Tyrrell will be 72 on May 3; it is 27 years since his team won the first of three world championships with Jackie Stewart. He's seen it all. Still, he wanted to see this. When I pointed out we shared a birthday, a broad grin lit up the craggy features. "I just hope you're going to see a few more..."

My previous record was not good. I'd piled up a Formula Ford and destroyed someone else's Lotus Cortina at Silverstone. "Have you any idea what you are letting yourself in for?" Tyrrell wanted to know. "The deal is this: we will insure the car and you will insure yourself. If a tyre goes down and you kill yourself — tough. We are not responsible."

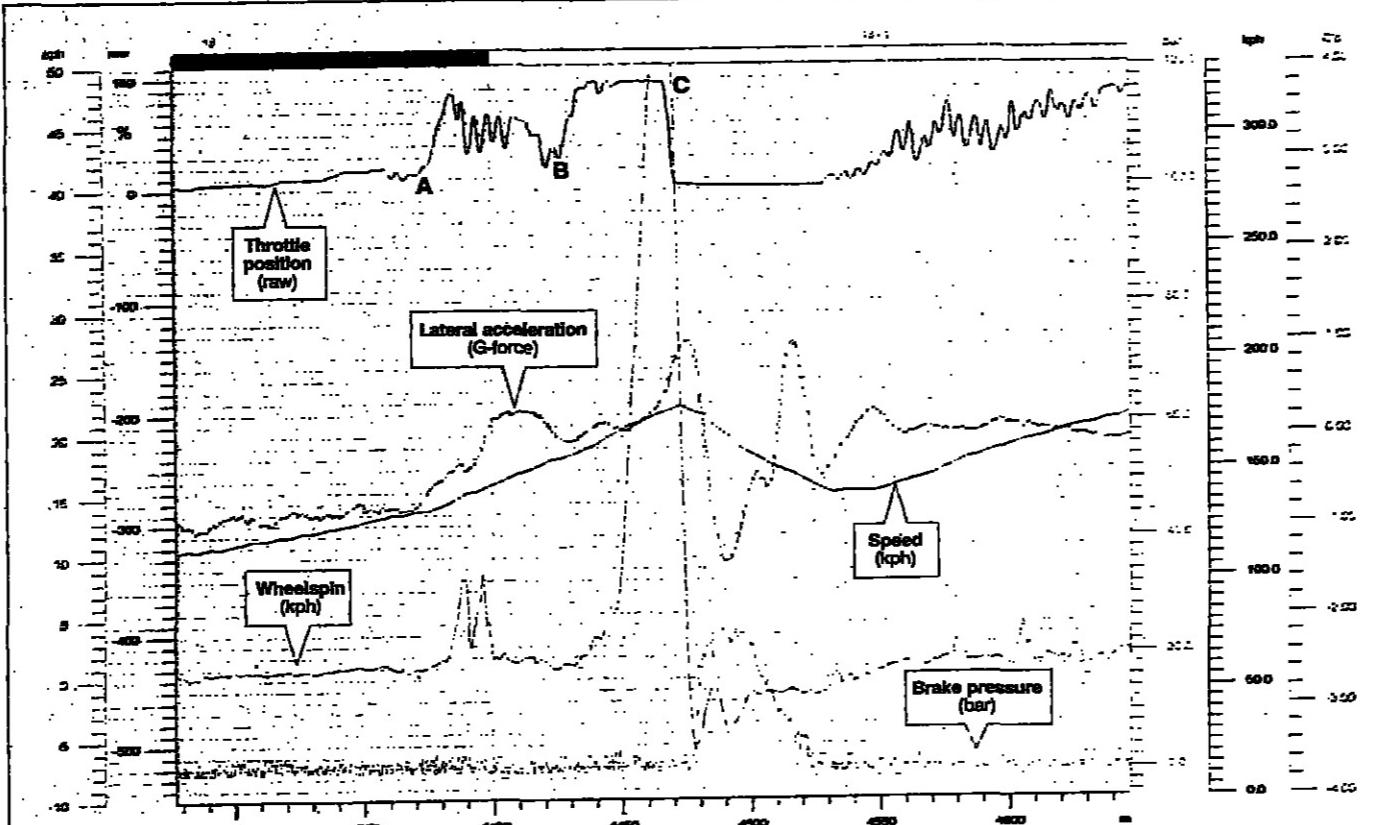
"You've got him worried already," laughed managing director and technical boffin Harvey Postlethwaite, as he scribbled in huge letters on a sticky memo pad which was then slapped onto my Filofax. RH-UP, LF-DOWN. It referred to gear shifting with the Tyrrell's steering mounted paddles — up the box with the right hand and down with the left. "Look at that every day between now and the time you drive our car."

The day arrived. I might be roughly the same height as Salo, but there it ended. Long body and short legs meant another 4cms on the crunch straps. Long indulgence and short exercise spelled another 6cms on the lap strap. But the pedal positions felt near perfect. I would only use the clutch to leave the pits, then forget its existence. However...

What you don't need with 700bhp is rain — but it was



The Tyrrell crew prepare Dodgins for a journey round the Barcelona track with the warning, "We will insure the car and you will insure yourself. If a tyre goes down and you kill yourself — tough. We are not responsible"



Graph shows throttle position (percentage), side force (Gs), speed (kph), wheelspin (kph) and brake pressure (1 bar = 14.5lbs/sq in approx). Circuit map shows area of incident

Confirmed on page 2

WHOOPS... THIS IS HOW IT ALL WENT WRONG

YOU'RE NEVER alone in a Formula One car. Every move made by the driver and every effect on the car is monitored by sensors and stored in an onboard computer, writes Alan Cops.

During a race, this "telemetry" is transmitted live to the pit engineers. The graph on the left is an extract from the data for Tony Dodgins' last lap and shows what happened when he momentarily lost control. Harvey Postlethwaite, Tyrrell's technical director, gave the explanation.

On the top border, green denotes the curve, white the straight. The scale at the bottom is the lap distance; our story starts at 4.280 kilometres. It spans the distance marked on the circuit map below. The top black line shows the throttle position. It is trailing close to zero as the car comes out of the corner at about 125kph (77mph), a speed denoted by the second black line.

At point A, Dodgins puts his foot down. The effect is seen on the blue line which shows the G forces on the driver:



a reading below zero is a force to the right, above to the left. From a steady level close to 1G to the right in the corner, there is a quick shift to the left.

The green line indicates wheelspin. The kph scale on the left shows the difference between the speed of rotation of the rear powered wheels and that of the front wheels. That first prod on the throttle sets the rear wheels spinning 7kph faster.

The throttle then bounces as Dodgins tries to let the car settle and a moment later, at point B, he presses the throttle to the floor. With 700bhp blasting through the rear wheels, but little adhesion, the wheelspin goes off the graph. The speed rises to a peak close to 180kph (112mph) and the blue line indicates a further shift to the left.

At point C, Dodgins lifts his foot, the right thing to do, but so violently that the wheels lock. The throttle responds instantly and the wheelspin line shows the front wheels turning faster. But the red line for brake pressure then shows him doing, in Postlethwaite's words "absolutely the wrong thing". A stab on the brake sends the car's rear end slewling to the left, then to the right. The snap is repeated before he takes his foot off everything and gingerly resumes progress along the straight. In Postlethwaite's words: "The conditions were infernal. It was a good effort to get that car back."

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Department of Transport tells thousands of centres to suspend 'cat' checks. Vaughan Freeman reports

Conflicting results bring chaos to new MoT pollution test

The new MoT test introduced last month to target emissions on three-year-old cars fitted with catalytic converters is degenerating into a chaotic mess as drivers and motoring organisations report widespread discrepancies in test results.

This week the Department of Transport contacted 18,000 MoT testing stations telling them to temporarily suspend the emissions aspect of the test on thousands of K-registered cars. The moratorium will last from six to eight weeks while limits for the emissions test are revised after fresh talks with manufacturers.

The problem says the department is that information supplied originally by manufacturers as to the minimum emissions limits that regularly serviced cars would pass proved hopelessly optimistic. As a result thousands of cars registered for the first time on or after August 1 1992 are unexpectedly failing, even if their catalysts are in perfect order.

A spokesman said: "It is vital that motorists with K-registered

cars know that their cars must have an MoT. To drive without one is illegal and will almost certainly invalidate their insurance." He added though that cars that go through the £27 MoT and are passed without having their emissions tested will nevertheless be road legal until their next MoT next year.

The test discrepancies mean that emissions element of the MoT has been suspended for all K-reg catalyst-fitted Daihatsu, Ford, HMG Sports cars, Isuzu, Mazda, RX7, Porsche, Proton, Rover, Subaru and TVR models, and for some Alfa Romeo, Aston Martin, Caterham, Fiat, Lada, Lancia and Mercedes-Benz models.

AA head of research and materials testing, John Stubbs, said: "We need this moratorium since clearly it would be unfortunate to take vehicles off the road. That is not the solution."

The AA is also concerned that the confusion over the emissions element of the MoT could undermine confidence in the whole test procedure, of which exhaust emis-

sions are only a small part. And that is not the only problem facing the new MoT, which introduced tough new emissions standards for catalyst-fitted cars individually tailored to each model and make according to manufacturer's data.

There are already cases of the same car failing the test on

emissions at one MoT centre only to pass it at another.

Businessman Frank Benzin was stunned when his 1.4 litre Renault 19, first registered exactly three years ago, failed its first MoT at his local Renault dealership because of poor emissions. He instantly sought a second opinion and, half an hour later, without anyone having touched the car's engine, it passed at another garage without any difficulties.

The car, with 72,000 miles on the clock, has been regularly serviced and Mr Benzin, manager of the *Conifers Printing Press* company in South Devon, said that when he took it for an MoT he was totally confident it would pass. For it to fail, and then pass elsewhere he said, showed that the new emis-

sions element of the examination was in total disarray.

"I was sure the car would pass the MoT and couldn't believe it when it failed," he said. "I went round the corner to another garage within half an hour and it passed with a completely different readout."

"Nationally a lot of people are going through the same problem, going to a garage where the emissions from their cars are being incorrectly measured, and as a result could be facing bills for a new catalytic converter of £200 to £500 and be really out of pocket."

"If motorists, like me, seek a second opinion, they could save themselves that money. The system, which is being introduced nationally, is clearly not 100 per cent accurate."

"The trouble is that you have a computer telling the mechanic that the car has failed and he or she has to go on that, but computers cannot be 100 per cent accurate unless every detail of the procedure is followed precisely, and every garage must use the same technology. I am afraid that is not the case."

"I think it is outrageous, and enough is enough. It doesn't look as if those in office have done their homework on this. I am all for clean air, but my experience shows the system isn't working."

This year around 1.5 million K-registered catalyst-fitted cars registered on or after August 1 1992 will go through the new MoT, and initial estimates were that up to 20 per cent — as many as 300,000 — would fail because their catalytic converter is broken, damaged, or is otherwise not working properly.

Bills would average £200-£400, but with a Rolls-Royce it could cost as much as £1,700 for a replacement catalyst unit.

The Retail Motor Industry Federation's own estimation is that the failure rate because of emissions for cat-fitted cars will be between 16 and 20 per cent, and that 150,000 motorists will need replacement converters and another 150,000 will need remedial work.

Catalysts remove approximately 90 per cent of the three worst exhaust fume pollutants — carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides, which are major contributors to acid rain and smog.



Frank Benzin: "I couldn't believe it when it failed. So I went to another garage within half an hour and it passed with a different readout"

Motor racing, past, present and future

• PAUL FRERE is one of the sages of motor sport. He won Le Mans in 1960 in a Ferrari with fellow-Belgian Olivier Gendebien. After competing in sports and Formula One racing for Ferrari, Aston Martin, Porsche and Cooper he wrote one of the first text books on competition driving. He has been in the business of writing about cars ever

since his enthusiasm undimmed at the age of 79. As the Formula One circus prepares for a new season that starts in Melbourne on March 10, he talks to Peter Miller about World Champion Michael Schumacher's move to Ferrari, Damon Hill's driving style and other topics. His tip for the driver's championship: Schumacher again.

Q: Can Schumacher do a hat-trick in 1996?

A: There might be reliability problems early on with a brand new Ferrari and engine. But by mid-season in Canada I expect the car to be fully raceworthy. He will have to win several races after Montreal to clinch the title.

Q: Will you compare Schumacher with Ayrton Senna?

A: Entirely different characters, but both very professional and with their lives utterly concentrated on motor racing. That combination produces world champions.

Q: How will Eddie Irvine relate with Schumacher at Ferrari?

A: Again, two opposing personalities — the dedicated champion paired with a more relaxed Ulsterman with numerous interests outside racing. Irvine will learn from Schumacher's ability to analyse the car's performance accurately and provide the specific information needed to set up his car for maximum efficiency.

Q: Is Damon Hill an artisitic driver like his father, Graham?

A: Yes, Graham and Damon are identical drivers. Damon is not as naturally gifted as Michael, but thanks to his concentration and will to win he is a top class driver. I don't think he got the same benefit from his team as Schumacher. Benetton trusted Schumacher's judgment utterly. If he pitted in practice, they listened to his suggestions. In my opinion, the Williams people

didn't have the same faith in Damon.

Q: Hill sometimes misjudges his overtaking and puts himself in a compromising situation. Is this a flaw?

A: Yes, definitely. Overtaking has become more difficult and drivers who can overtake at the right time and place have a distinct advantage.

Q: What about Jean Alesi? Is he too much of a charger?

A: He certainly is a charger — an acrobat at the wheel — but so was Tazio Nuvolari. Nuvolari, however, was an exception and most world champions are smooth drivers. I think Alesi can expect fierce opposition from his Benetton team-mate, Berger, who is very experienced and can be very fast if he thinks he has a race-winning car.

Q: Is sponsorship ruining Formula One? Are the top teams too rich?

A: Sponsorship could be a good thing, but unfortunately only the top teams get big money. They also get about 70 engines per season free. The "also-rans of pit-alley", who struggle for sponsorship and must buy their own engines, never get a chance. This year, Ferrari could be the dark horse. It all depends on how quickly the new car can be sorted. Incidentally, Ferrari is no longer as Italian as most people think. The overall project is in the hands of an Englishman, John Barnard, the engine designer is Osamu Goto, a Japanese formerly with Honda, and team manager is a Frenchman, Jean Todt.

Q: Is Colin Chapman in Team Lotus often enter a third car for a "national" driver 30 years ago? Weren't they "rent-a-drivers"?

A: Not exactly. In those days, the automobile club organising the grand prix would often pay considerable starting money for a local driver to attract the crowds. Today, it is all in the hands of Foca and a "super" licence is needed before any driver may enter Formula One.

Q: Are drivers like Schumacher really worth \$25 million for 17 races?

Q: Can the average continental still afford to watch expensive Formula One?

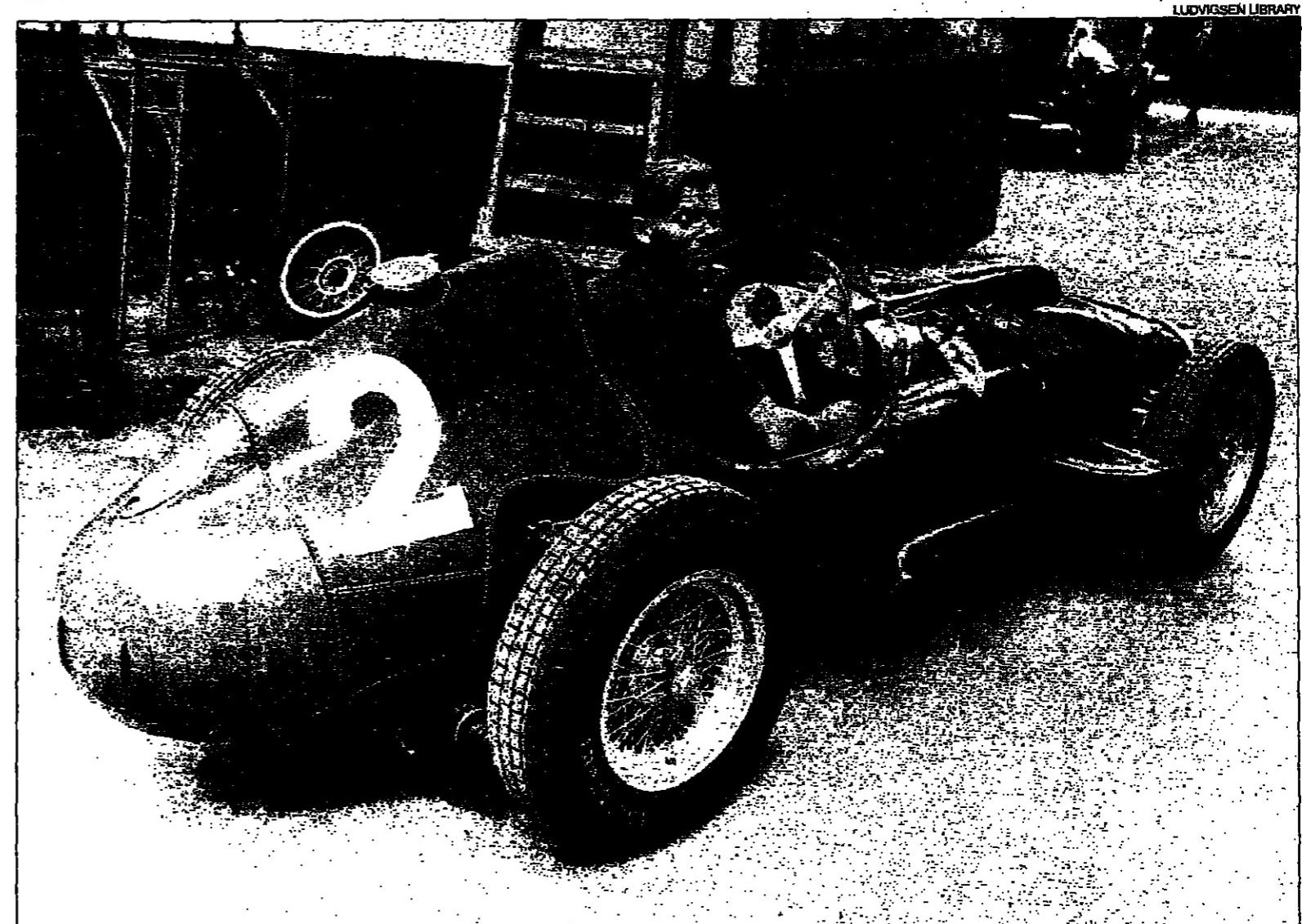
A: I don't think that Foca — the Formula One Constructor's Association — cares enough about encouraging race fans. Motor racing cannot survive through television audiences alone. It needs a live, enthusiastic crowd watching thrilling racing — because that is becomes real show business.

Q: Are some drivers contributing sponsorship money and not being chosen on merit?

A: Yes, this is a major problem. Formula One has two types of driver — those who are paid huge money for driving a car and those who inject considerable sums of money into the team kitty just to get a drive. Their money often only lasts for a few grands prix when they are replaced by another driver with sponsorship. So, when considering the also-rans, it doesn't follow that the better driver gets chosen.

Q: But didn't Colin Chapman of Team Lotus often enter a third car for a "national" driver 30 years ago? Weren't they "rent-a-drivers"?

A: Not exactly. In those days, the automobile club organising the grand prix would often pay considerable starting money for a local driver to attract the crowds. Today, it is all in the hands of Foca and a "super" licence is needed before any driver may enter Formula One.



Paul Frere in his racing days: "The sport cannot survive through television audiences alone. It needs a live crowd — then it becomes real show business"

A: It is entirely proportionate.

Mr Hill — but that is the harsh irony of life.

Q: Are data acquisition systems [telemetry] preventing good test drivers emerging?

A: No, both are vital. Onboard computers constantly read every aspect of a car's performance and relay it back to another computer in the pits. When a driver comes in to the pits and reports personally, his engineer can quickly see where performance may be improved. It is also a vital safety factor, as a driver on the track can be given advance warning of a deflating tyre before a possible accident.

Q: Foca has made pit-stops mandatory. Are too many crews at risk?

A: Definitely! In the 1950s,

only two mechanics were allowed on the track and they did everything at a pit-stop — refuelling, oil, change tyres — while the team manager briefed his driver. If more than two mechanics worked on the car, it was immediately disqualified. Now the wealthy teams have at least 20 track personnel at every stop. This causes severe overcrowding in the pit-road with the real risk of crew members being run over or trapped in an inferno of blazing fuel.

Q: Who were your favourite drivers?

A: Without doubt, my top three would be Stirling Moss, Juan Manuel Fangio and Alberto Ascari.



Advice: Tony Dodgins, left, with Harvey Postlethwaite

'I give it full throttle. The crew run for cover'

Continued from Page 1
tipping down. Tough. The track time was non-negotiable. It was now or never.

Cocooned low in the cockpit, I flick down the ignition switch and the Yamaha engineers fire it up from behind my shoulders. The external starter motor is plugged in and an air bottle is used to charge the pneumatic valves as an extra safety measure. There is none of the gut-wrenching vibrations you expect. The Yamaha, in fact, feels quite removed.

Time to go. I arm the gearbox electronics via a three-position switch on the right of the cockpit, depress the clutch and flick the right-hand gear paddle to first. You need 3000rpm plus to prevent a stall and the pit apron glistens. Avoiding potential embarrassment, the mechanics push the car out and point it in the right direction. I determine not to

jerk to an embarrassing standstill, discover there is more clutch travel than I imagine, find the biting point and lurch away down the lane, I'm driving a Formula One car!

PLUMES of spray fan from the front tyres. The steering is direct, kart-like, but not heavy. That, though, is probably enough to load it up. Down the hill into the slowest hairpin, my head is jolted by bumps, which in the road car hadn't even existed. Even on the overrun, with no throttle, the engine tries to push the tail out.

The run down into the Wurth chicane provides the first opportunity to get hard on the throttle. Trouble is, as the road kinks left a stream of standing water runs across the track. Even the likes of Senna and Prost have spun in a straight line in such condi-

tions, so I back off, turn into Wurth with practically no speed and the thing swaps ends instantly.

Time to radio in: "Don't worry, I haven't hit anything." I sit there on the grass feeling foolish while they come out with the air bottle and fire it up again. Then it's my first hill start in an F1 car. Back to the pit for a check over.

Out again, and this time I tickle it around before coming through on to Barcelona's mile-long straight for the first time. I get on to the throttle and wait for the earth-shattering explosion of power. But it's not as dramatic as I'd thought. That's because they've programmed the electronic throttle for delayed response and somewhat less than full power. But the brakes: they are simply phenomenal, hauling the speed down as I go on them at the 200 metre board from 150mph plus. Real driv-

ers leave it later than 100 metres from 190mph!

The Wurth chicane catches me out again, this time on the exit. Another spin. Another stall. Air bottle needed again and back to the pits. I ask for a more instant throttle and systems engineer Chris Hills flicks forward the throttle mode switch on the right of the cockpit. They also give me full power. With the scheduled hour fast evaporating, it's time for my last run.

Leaving the pitlane, I instantly feel the difference. Now the shifts from the pneumatic six-speed gearbox feel even more stunning. Flick, flick. I go from cog to cog in milliseconds, up and down. I come out on to the straight and give it 85 per cent throttle. How do I know that? Because the ensuing "moment" amuses the team so much that they expand it on the computer telemetry which monitors

everything the car does. It's the ultimate spy in the cab.

Instantly there is wheelspin, so I back off, figuring the car must not have been straight. Convinced it now is, I give it full throttle. Suddenly I'm in a 15g tail-slapper as the car snaps left-right-left-right as quickly as you can blink. The Tyrrell crew run for cover.

THE steering inputs looked mighty interesting and the wheelspin was off the graph! Postlethwaite explained later. "I don't know whether you knew much about it, but you did bloody well to get that back. It's not a nice feeling to lose an F1 car in the wet at 180kph. Ken had already sent for the ambulance ..."

Chastened, I carry on with a suitably progressive and respectful application of right foot. Three-quarters of the way round the next lap, I spin once more, thankfully without

contact again, and I'm out of time. I've done two complete laps with a time for the three-mile circuit that is 30 seconds away from Tyrrell's Ukyo Katayama, when he goes out in slightly drier conditions. So, can the man in the street do it? On the basis of my efforts, not a chance. A spectator summed it up: "You weren't going to heat the tyres or brakes, or go quickly enough to generate downforce. You can spin these things at the most pathetically slow speeds and, given the conditions, you were on a hiding to nothing. Having the confidence to drive it quickly means knowing it. And how do you get to know it? It's the chicken and egg situation."

From an article in 'F1 Racing', a new monthly devoted to Grand Prix racing to be published in English and German. The first issue will be available this Friday, February 16 price £2.95.

Perry Cleveland-Peck joins our Drive in Luxury competition winner as his Fiat Tipo is transformed

A £1,500 inside job adds that Rolls-Royce feel



Joining the upper classes: Roland Roberts reflects on how his car might look after the experts have finished

What with the occasional light aircraft, one or two small sports cars and the occasional motorhome, the vehicle interior craftsmen at Stratstone get some odd requests. Nevertheless, a complete leather refit to an F-registered Fiat Tipo was a challenge that they had to take.

At the winner of The Times Drive in Luxury competition, Roland Roberts, 40, a piano tuner technician and motoring enthusiast from Stamford, Lincolnshire, was entitled to a complete leather refit of a style and cut of his choice — approximately £1,500 worth of leather craftsmanship. The Times spent the day with him and his car as he toured the Stratstone Showrooms in search of his dream interior.

Stratstone of Wilmslow, Cheshire, established in 1909 as Stratstone of Layfair and now part of the giant 'endragon' group, is one of five franchises making up one of the largest Porsche, Ferrari, Rolls-Royce, Mazda and Bentley dealerships inside London. The company's interior division specialises in a bespoke leather upholstery service. Seven fitters and one apprentice can take a wide selection of hides and craft them into original handmade leather interiors to exact requirements. As the brochure states: 'The options are limited only by your imagination.'

Imagination was in great demand when Mr Roberts, wearing a stylish Rolls-Royce tie, arrived at the Stratstone workshop with his 1989 Fiat tipo 1.9 Tids. Greeted by Steve Gough, the customer sales

manager, who suggested a look at some of the completed Stratstone interiors before making any decisions, Mr Roberts was chauffeuried to the Ferrari, Porsche and Rolls-Royce showroom in a Silver Shadow to study some of the leather upholstery.

On route, Steve Gough explained a little about the company's policy. 'We use the finest leathers from Connolly or Bridge of Weir, we don't compromise on quality. It has taken us a long time to get our team together and they now have over 90 years of experience.'

Did this experience stretch to Fiat Types? 'No, we haven't done one of those before,' Steve confessed.

'Usually we get Mercedes-Benz, Jaguars or BMWs whose owners want a leather interior put into their new cars — the new Rover MGFs are proving to be quite popular.'

At the showroom, the Times prizewinner was momentarily silenced by a collection of some of the finest thoroughbred driving machines available: a gleaming Ferrari 512 M, an F-registered Testarossa worth £60,000, a 911 turbo and £63,000 worth of brand new Porsche 911 Targa, with glass sliding roof — clearly, there was no shortage of inspiration for Mr Roberts's interior.

Deciding that a pragmatic approach was the only suitable method for discerning the needs of the passenger, Mr Roberts positioned himself behind the wheel of a recently registered black Bentley Brooklands, complete with white-walled tyres. Looking replete, he volunteered that the Bentley was 'quite comfortable really', to which

the Stratstone team, appreciating that they were not miracle workers, appeared worried.

Still, either unsatisfied, or perhaps relishing this new-found indulgence, Mr Roberts took up the driving seat of a brand new Ferrari 456 GT, a car he describes himself as 'passionate about'. Worth £157,000 and delivering a performance which takes it to 60mph in 5.2 seconds, the four-seater Ferrari demonstrated an example of superior motoring luxury.

Back at the workshop, a long, low, rectangular room, smelling strongly of leather and resin and home for a while to a Porsche 911, a Mercedes-Benz 220 and now Mr Roberts's Tipo, headcraftsman Evan Pugh took stock of the metallic green/grey Fiat (with a Ferrari badge on the passenger wing and Mercedes C-class wheel trims) as he explained details of how the installation procedure is carried out.

First we remove the seats, door panels, headlining and dashboard," he explained. "Then we unstitch the seat covers and sew on the selected hides. We use a nylon-bonded thread and a variety of stitches — mostly a saddle or face stitch for a strong, double-lined seam.

Gearsticks and steering wheels are hand-sewn with a cross-stitch. On average it takes one person a week to complete the interior of a vehicle. Door panels go on last and, if necessary, incorporate a stitched pattern in order to break up the bulk. Similarly with the headrests."

The choice of hide is down to the



Before: Mr Roberts's Tipo had 104,000 miles on the clock when he arrived at Stratstone. Only his imagination limited its new look



After: 'Better than I ever imagined it would be, the workmanship is amazing. My car is unique and, at the very least, smells like a Rolls-Royce'

individual. Connolly leathers tend to be softer and are of the type usually found in Jaguars, Aston Martins, Rolls-Royces and Ferraris. Bridge of Weir hides have a slightly more defined grain and are found in Saabs, Volvos and, at one time, Lotus vehicles.

Outside the hide-room, the Stratstone team waited to hear Mr

Roberts's final decision. Discussing the metallic green colour of his car with tongue in cheek, he inquired into the quantity and shades of purple hides available, which raised a few eyebrows around the workshop and provoked a distant muted response of 'must be a mate of Stevie Wonder.'

In the end, Mr Roberts selected a

set of bottle green Bridge of Weir hides with ruffled seat centres, flat borders and black piping. Stitching around the armrests broke up the door panels. Green headrests with black piping finished the job. And when everything was completed, an extremely satisfied Mr Roberts said that his Fiat Tipo, which he bought three years ago and now

has 104,000 miles on the clock, looked 'better than I ever imagined it would be'. Before its makeover it was worth about £2,000.

He added: 'The standard of workmanship is amazing — they have done a really good job. My car is unique and, at the very least, it smells like a Rolls-Royce.'

Stratstone Of Wilmslow, 01625 532678

Trust your luck in the year 2000 as cars enter the age of green



Colour coded from left, PPG's Rainer Becher, Mike Mudge and Janis Brennen

Superstitious motorists should steer clear of the new car market in 1999. According to predictions at last week's 1999 Colour Show, green — once considered as unlucky as a broken mirror or the number 13 — will be the year's trendiest car colour.

Automotive colour styling consultant, Mike Mudge said: 'Despite being traditionally thought of as unlucky, green cars have rocketed into third place in the popularity stakes, after red and blue.'

The percentage of green cars in the UK has risen from 4.2 per cent in 1990 to 17 per cent. Red accounts for 25.4 per cent and blue 23.7 per cent. Even fleet buyers, who have traditionally bought white cars in bulk, are not immune to the new trend. 'For years the top three car colours have been red, blue and white, but the popularity of white has been propped up by the company car market and environmentally-friendly fleet managers are now looking to green,' said Mudge.

The PPG Industries Colour Show, held annually in Europe, North America and the Far East, predicts car trends three years ahead and launches new colours. Chances are high that you will not have heard of PPG (Pittsburgh Plate Glass Industries), but you'll find its products on your own car. Two-thirds of the vehicles in the Western world use PPG Industries' automotive coatings; it is the largest supplier of car paint in the world.

At the 1999 Colour Show

Helen Mound checks the forecasts of the millennium's trendy shades

were on display for manufacturers from all over the world to consider using on the new cars they have planned for the next millennium. The colours on offer in the UK, US and the Far East vary because of different tastes; motorists in the Far East prefer shades of silver and grey, while most European countries have reds at the top of their list. Weather conditions also affect the choice; colours that look good in the UK can look grubby in California sunshine.

The show gives manufacturers a chance to plan the colour palette for their new cars, so that carpets, seat trim and interior plastics can be designed to suit predicted fashion colours. In Italy the PPG range is so successful that Lancia has picked 112 colours for its Y10 hatchback. But manufacturers sometimes make hasty choices. Like the 'Sahara Desert' Land Rover chose to add a high profile to the launch of its new Range Rover. The lurid gold is complex and very costly for PPG Refinish to produce in small quantities for individual paint repairs.

As well as predicting green as the colour for 1999, 44 new UK colours were launched this year, including 15 shades of green, ranging from olive to

bright apple. There are also several new browns and violets on offer, but not many blues, greys and yellows. Two new paint effects were also announced, micro mica and coloured aluminium (a metallic paint with coloured flecks in the paint).

Launching a new colour is a tricky business: Mudge, alongside European and American colleagues Rainer Becher and Janis Brennen shows the colours off using giant jelly moulds known as 'speeding images' — shapes designed to accentuate the curves of a car.

Other colours are on panels similar to car doors, and each is displayed

among photographs of the influences that helped to create them, such as women's fashion, travel destinations, plants and food.

Mudge explains how the research for each show takes more than a year. 'We're already looking at the colour trends for 2000. The majority of our influences come from women's fashion, we look at magazines and fashion shows, but also interior design.'

The traditional notion of space age silver fashions and grey cars is proving out-dated for the year 2000. 'Currently we're seeing a move towards more natural earthy colours,

greens and browns are in fashion for women's clothes, and as these colours tend to translate into the car industry over three or four years, we expect to see more green and brown cars in the next millennium.'

In the six years Mudge has presented the Colour Show, he believes the major breakthrough has been mica paint: 'It involves three-dimensional spheres which are translucent, so not only can they reflect a certain amount of light, they also let light through, allowing for much brighter colours to be developed. The micro micas will improve on that brightness.'

Ultimately we're interested in developing new effects, as they allow for new colours. In the late Eighties the split between solid colours and micas or metallics was 60/40, now it's more like 40/60, because the choice of mica metallic colours is so much wider. With the use of micro mica, we expect to see even more exciting colours being developed.'

Standing out from the bright lights and general hubbub of the show, Gary Picken, UK Business Development Manager for PPG Automotive Refinish, is a little solicitous: 'Once these colours and effects have been invented, the difficult part is making sure we can make them in small quantities for car dealership bodyshops. They have to be easy and affordable to repair.'

No surprise, then, that under PPG's advice, Land Rover has left the Sahara Desert. Blue is the second most popular colour. Said to indicate a conventional attitude to life, it is much favoured by current Ford drivers.

Silver is another shade favoured by the successful who want to be less discreet than those who favour black. Striking recent additions to the colour range include orange and purple which are proving popular for the MG and a wonderful mustard for the Fiat Punto. But if you really want to be noticed then yellow is for you. The perfect shade for the show-off.

How you are the colour you drive

THE British taste for red, which accounts for more than a quarter of all cars on the road, is shared by most other European countries.

Surprisingly for such a popular shade, an analysis last year by a leading insurance company concluded that red signifies an ambitious driver who dislikes routine. In the Far East white is more popular, especially in Japan where it is a symbol of purity.

But when it comes to status, Henry Ford was right: black is the colour to be seen in if you want to appear successful or, of course, if you can afford a chauffeur. There is a price to pay, however, because it also carries a higher risk of theft.

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A GRIDLOCK GUIDE

• LONDON

A40 Western Avenue, Acton. Major roadworks with a contraflow between Hilary Road in Acton and the Northern roundabout in White City. A406 North Circular Road, Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks continue over the Lee Valley viaduct. A406 North Circular Road, Finchley. Major roadworks continue with various restrictions between the A1 and A1000 junctions. A12 Eastern Avenue, Wanstead. Construction of the M11 link road continues, with eastbound reduced to a single lane between the Redbridge roundabout and High Street. A4 Great West Road, Chiswick. Between 9pm and 6am Monday–Thursday nights reduced to one lane each way for repair to elevated section of the M4 above.

• SOUTH-EAST

M4 Berkshire. Major roadworks and a contraflow between junctions 8 and 8/9 cause lengthy tailbacks daily. M25 Surrey. Two sections of widening works, with lane closures and contraflows between junctions 8/9 and 9/10. A247 Surrey. Roadworks on street between Clandon Station and Clandon Park. Long delays expected during peak times. A509 Buckinghamshire. Major roadworks on Wellington Road in Olney, at junction with Lavendon Road.

A27 East Sussex. Major roadworks at Firle, between Seaford and Lewes, with temporary lights. A249 Kent. Major works at the Stockbury roundabout west of Sittingbourne often cause lengthy hold-ups between the M2 and Kingsterry Bridge.

A36 Hampshire. Bridge repairs at Wellow, north-west of Southampton.

• SOUTH-WEST

M4/M5 Avon. Work on the new second Severn crossing continues, with restrictions around the Almondsbury & Aust Interchanges, and also on the M5 around junction 18.

M32 Avon. Contraflow for major roadworks between junctions 1 and 2. Southbound entry slip at junction 1 also closed off-peak.

A4 Avon. Lane restrictions and temporary lights over the Newbridge Bridge, Bath.

M5 Somerset. Bridge repairs with lane closures both ways between junctions 21 and 22.

A30 Cornwall. Roadworks and a contraflow near Bolventor.

M5 Devon. Lane closures northbound between junctions 29 and 28.

A377 Devon. Roadworks continue around Eggardon, between Exeter and Barnstaple, with temporary lights.

• MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

M6 West Midlands. Major roadworks continue between junctions 5 and 6 with lane restrictions in both directions.

A6 Leicestershire. Major roadworks and contraflow at Lockington, between junctions 24 and 25 of the M1 and Sawley Island. A563 Leicestershire. Roadworks and contraflow on Lubberthorpe Way, Leicester between the Dunbell Island and the A47 Hinckley Road junction.

A1 Nottinghamshire. Roadworks on Apley Head roundabout near Worksop cause regular peaktime delays.

A47 Norfolk. Two sets of major roadworks at Tewinbury St John, and at Swaffham.

• NORTH

M1 West Yorkshire. Roadworks and traffic flow at end of the motorway at junction 47.

M6 Cheshire. Widening work continues between junctions 20 and 21.

M6 Greater Manchester. Roadworks and lane closures between junctions 24 and 26.

M6 Lancashire. Lane closures in both directions between junctions 30 and 31 for work on the J65 extension.

A5063 Greater Manchester. Major roadworks and lane closures on Trafford Road, near the junction with Pomona Strand.

A630 South Yorkshire. Major roadworks and contraflow on the Rotherway at Canidow, between junction 33 of the M1 and Rotherham.

A167M Tyne-side. Northbound lane closures on the Newcastle Central Motorway near the Jesmond Road interchange for bridge repairs.

• WALES

M4 Gwent. Widening work continues in connection with second Severn crossing between junctions 22 and 24.

A48 West Glamorgan. Construction work with lane closures on all approaches to the Wythtree roundabout at Morriston.

A483 Mid Glamorgan. Major roadworks and contraflow on Fabian Way, Swansea between Elba Crescent and Earlswood traffic lights.

A4229 Mid Glamorgan. Roadworks and temporary lights between Cornelly and Pontcawl.

A547 Gwynedd. Bridge repairs with temporary lights near A55 junction 21, Llandudno Junction.

• SCOTLAND

M8 Strathclyde. Roadworks with lane closures in both directions between junctions 26 and 27.

A748 Strathclyde. Dalmarnock Bridge in Glasgow is closed southbound for repairs.

M90 Tayside. Major roadworks at junction 10 with lane closures in both directions.

• NORTHERN IRELAND

County Tyrone. Roadworks on the Omagh Bypass at the junction with Derry Road.

It began when I found a hole in the exhaust; one arm and one leg (plus VAT) later, I was reporting to the station

A paper chase with the police

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

I life from time to time irritates art, my latest escapade irritated the modern television art of Victor Meldrew. Indeed, the phrase "I don't believe it" was passing from my larynx across my tongue when it turned into a resigned laugh, for the ability to see the funny side is becoming part of the standard-issue motoring kit.

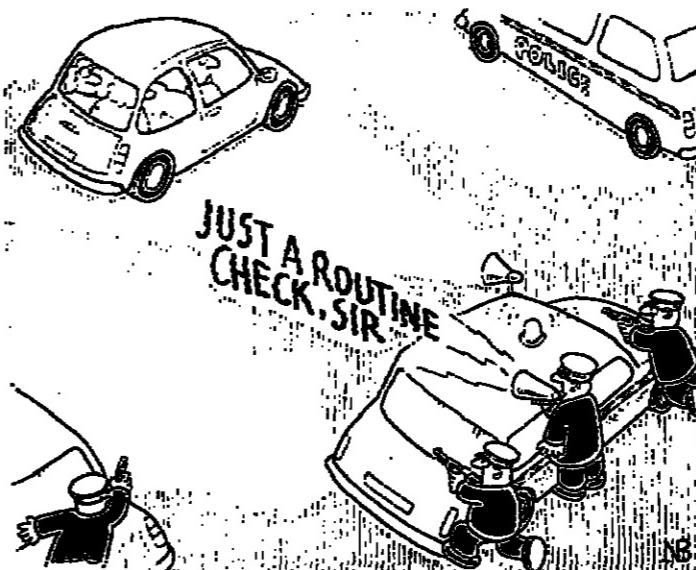
What I needed was a new exhaust. So I went to an industrial estate where people with new exhausts tend to locate themselves. I knew the front section had a hole in it, but exhaust-tires can always find two more holes, each of which is in a different section.

I need all three bits, but the exhaust type only had bits one and three. I decided to go elsewhere. I drove away... and was pulled over by the police.

"I've stopped you for having a noisy exhaust," said the officer. "I don't believe it..." I started. "Yes I know, I've just been down to get one but they didn't have all the parts, so now I'm going to..."

Pause to give the officer some

credit. He will have heard this explanation a thousand times, but his face betrayed not a hint of world-weariness. In fact he looked as if he believed me, perhaps on the basis that the truth is stranger than fiction. He then came out with the dread words "routine check". Lights, brake lights, tyres and so on. Now, when you write a column like this, which is often about the ludicrous behaviour of other people you get letters accusing you of pomposity. The



people who send those letters will

get them replaced, they issue a form

which has to be stamped by an MoT station to confirm the work has been done. You send it off to the police within 14 days and no more is said.

So I drove straight back to the

exhaust type – he is also a tyre type

– and after a bit of joshing about

him ringing up the police whenever

people with noisy exhausts disdain

his services he fitted two tyres. Later

I had the exhaust replaced, paid the bill – which came to one arm and

one leg, plus VAT – got the form stamped by an MoT station and sent it off. So that was all right.

What was not all right was the other part of the routine check: one's documents. I carry a driving licence, but not the insurance and registration document. Incidentally, people who carry photocopies of these in their cars are wasting their time: the police won't accept them.

So I had to produce the documents within seven days and discovered when I did so that the police station I nominated – in a small market town – has to deal with this procedure 3,000 times a year. I am all for people having the right documents, but police stations are pressed enough without having that tedious procedure added to their duties.

Several police officers I have spoken to would like to see the American system introduced. Over there, cars carry a disc on the windscreen which has all the relevant information: owner's name, registration document number, insurance details and so on. Thus the driver only has to carry his or her licence and in America (fly-drive tourists please note) you will certainly be prosecuted for not doing so.

As my campaign to have road tax abolished shows no sign of bearing fruit, perhaps the DoT would at least amend the disc to carry more information, thus saving motorists time and the police paperwork.

What can the matter be?

Sue Baker joins the thousands of motorists asked to bring their cars back because something's wrong

The garage service receptionist was cheerfully candid. "This is all becoming a bit of a silly nightmare for us. It has been going on for months. We keep booking cars in, but some of them need parts that we're still waiting to arrive from Germany."

I had telephoned to book in my Golf for a safety inspection, as urged by Volkswagen last week. Their letter alerted me to my car being subject to a recall, although that word was not used. VW called it a "safety action".

My car had been identified as one which, if operated over a prolonged period with an overheating cooling system, might suffer a ruptured heat exchanger. In other words, if the car had not been looked after and was consistently run with the engine too hot, the heater might one day split and cascade scalding water over my feet.

The work to avoid this alarming prospect would be carried out "without charge" – but apparently not without inconvenience. The first available appointment was two weeks away, the chatty receptionist informed me. "We're snowed under with all this."

Checking would take about an hour and a half, during which time a safety valve would be installed in the heater. But further work might be needed. Some recalled cars were found to need a new heater matrix, requiring a second, longer visit.

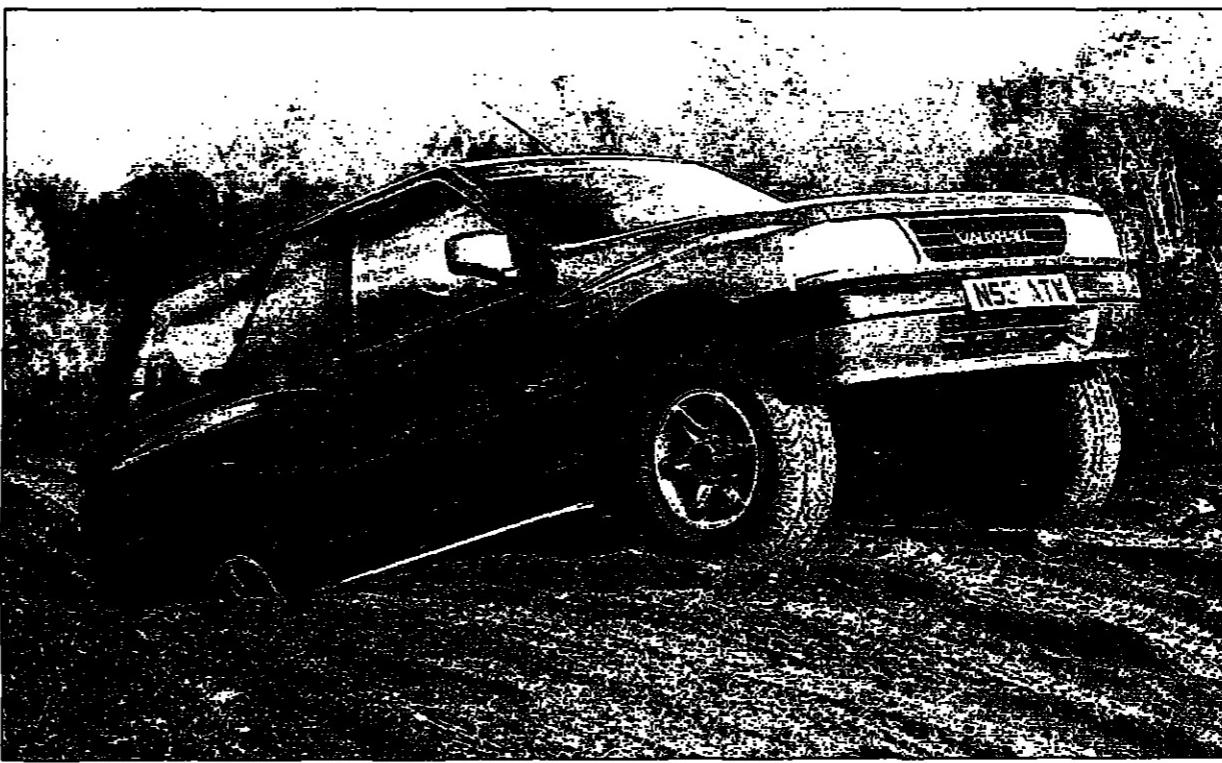
Because of the numbers involved – more than 200,000 cars in the UK – VW has been conducting this recall in waves over nine months. Even so, it is not the biggest recall of the past year. That is credited to Vauxhall, with more than 600,000 Astras called-in to check on a potential fire risk, caused by possible static sparking during refuelling, as well as another problem which could cause the airbag to fail to operate.

Recalls are an irksome thorn in the side of the motor industry. They are costly, time-consuming and common. Last year there were 91 vehicle recalls, 53 of them involving cars, with buses and commercial vehicles accounting for the rest. That is a 50 per cent increase since 1980.

The total number of vehicles involved in 1995 was 1,190,611.

Notoriously, a small percentage of owners never respond to recall notices, even after several reminders. Although some of those vehicles may no longer be in use perhaps long since scrapped or exported – it still leaves worryingly high numbers of cars on the roads with potentially hazardous faults.

The Society of Motor Manu-



More than 18,500 Fronteras – among 640,000 Vauxhalls recalled during 1995 – needed a faulty bonnet catch fixed



Volkswagen urged a safety check on 237,000 of its Golf models after a heat exchanger problem was discovered

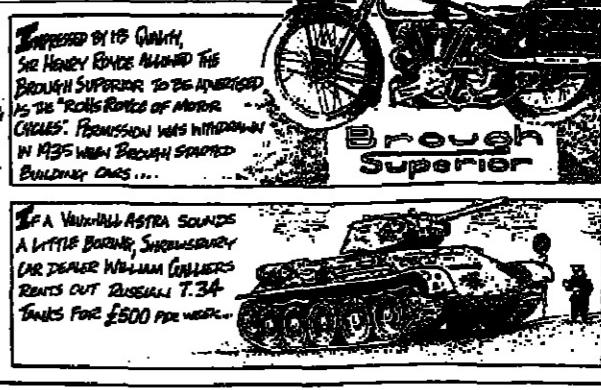
facturers and Traders takes pride in the response to recalls in Britain, which it claims is among the best in the world. Under a Code of Practice established in 1979, manufacturers regularly meet a target of 90 per cent recall response. But that still leaves a significant shortfall. Based on last year's figures, it means there were potentially nearly 120,000 owners who neglected to react to manufacturers' pleas to have their vehicles checked for known safety hazards.

Sean Wadmore, the SMMT's consumer affairs manager, says Britain's record compares well with the United States, where recall response is nearer 55 per cent, but he is not complacent.

"Manufacturers aim to achieve a 100 per cent response, but some vehicles will always slip through the net."

"A major problem is the failure of people to notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency when a car changes hands. The details of ownership that manufacturers obtain from the DLA are only a snapshot, and some are inevitably wrong."

AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long



Taxing question

MOTORISTS should be told exactly how much of what they pay for fuel is going into the Chancellor's pocket, say the AA and RAC. Less than one-third of the £24 billion raised in tax at the petrol pump is spent on transport. A joint campaign to highlight the facts was launched during a debate on transport policy with the facts was launched during a debate on transport policy with the Jonathon Porritt, former director of Friends of the Earth, at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu yesterday. Neil Johnson, the RAC's chief executive officer, said: "Despite the fact that the majority of motorists consider the car a necessity, the Treasury continues to tax it as if it is a luxury."

Barnard honoured

JOHN BARNARD, technical director of McLaren, Lola and Benetton in a career spanning more than 25 years in motor sport, has been made a Royal Designer for Industry (RDI), a rare honour awarded by the Royal Society. His designs included the first all-carbon fibre chassis for McLaren and pioneering use of the electronic shifting gearbox by Ferrari.

Energy conservers

THE new BMW 5-series, to be launched in Britain in April, will be fitted with energy-saving tyres developed by Continental. The German company claims that the ContiEcoContact tyre offers 25 per cent less rolling resistance than its previous range, paving the way for major savings in fuel consumption.

Savings for security

MORE than 50 insurance companies are now offering discounts of up to 20 per cent to motorists who fit their cars with Securicor's TrakBak, the advanced protection, tracking and recovery system, which features a sophisticated immobiliser and an automatic self-start signal if a thief defeats it.

Going too far can reduce the chances of children

Vaughan Freeman enters a fertile area

High-mileage males drivers have been given "stop, get out, shake 'em all about" advice by fertility experts in an effort to help prevent them developing problems they may experience in becoming a dad.

Sitting for hours every day at the overheated wheel of a company car or as a service engineer, or cooking gently in a lorry cab, legs clamped together, has been shown to reduce the chances of would-be fathers.

Research in France shows that the partners of men who spend hours at the wheel take up to 10 per cent longer to conceive. The Paris research concludes that this is because the testicles of drivers become unnaturally warm as they sit at the steering wheel, which can have the effect of lowering the sperm count.

Peter Bromwich of the Midland Fertility Services says high mileage driving can reduce sperm count by a few per cent: "At the margins, having semen problems is a difficulty where driving too much makes semen less good. Wives of such men, instead of getting pregnant in four months, might get pregnant in five or six months."

For drivers who are concerned, he advises them to restructure their day, and plan journeys so that they spend less time at the wheel: "If they are having to drive a lot, then every couple of hours stop the car, get out, walk around, shake their testes up and let some cool air in."

It was first noticed when people looked at the Teamsters' Union in the United States and found that truck drivers who did more than 25,000 miles in a year were less fertile than those who drove fewer than 25,000 miles a year."

Mr Bromwich explained that the testes work better when they are cooler and men are designed so that they "hang outside the body. Blokes are designed not to wear anything in that area, and for the testes to hang free away from the body and to keep cool."

However, Mr Bromwich stresses that alcohol and cigarettes are far more likely to reduce the efficacy of sperm, and new fertility techniques mean that even the highest-mileage drivers have a chance of fathering.

It resembles a lemon drop on wheels and driving it is like being in an RAF Phantom. Kevin Eason reports

Tax disc? Look, I haven't even got a windscreen

My mind was focused on the curves, the gear-change and the split-second decision that would be the difference between braking in time and a visit to the gravel trap.

There I was, dressed like a cross between an Eskimo and Michael Schumacher, ready to confront Renault's new Sport Spider, a 135mph open two-seater of such radical design that it will drop jaws all over Europe this year.

But I had other things on my mind. I mean, there are all these clever design chappies working away on a mega-budget and they come up with a car that looks like a lemon drop on wheels — and there's still nowhere to stick the tax disc. As well as no roof, there isn't a windscreen either.

Renault launched its Sport Spider this week at the Paul Ricard circuit, near Marseille. The French company has one of the most flamboyant and interesting design teams in

Europe and, apparently, a management prepared to produce vehicles which push the boundaries of taste to a seldom explored limit.

The Spider should, by all conventions, never have been built. Carmakers show concept models like it all the time at motor shows, claiming they are the future — then go off and make something that looks as interesting as a milk float. Renault actually did it with the Spider, making a car quite unlike anything else.

Squat and low, the road-going version has the same 2-litre, 150 brake horse power engine that goes into the Renault Clio Williams, mounted behind two deeply uncomfortable bucket seats. The doors spring up and pull down like beetle wings to enclose the most Spartan interior in world motoring: the cabin is little more than an aluminium and composite box.

The driver faces a dashboard with stainless steel dials, showing engine revs, oil pressure and engine temperature; speedo, clock and fuel gauge are all shown separately on a digital screen. The seat moves forward but the steel drilled pedals move up to meet the driver if needs be. There is no heater and forget radio, with no side windows either, you could never get near hearing it even if it used the speakers from a Blur concert.

The Spider has cleverly positioned stats, which apparently deflect the air up and over the driver and passenger. Great theory, but requiring a great act of faith from your faithful test driver. I accepted the argument, but why was there an array of helmets ready to pick up before I was sent out on no public roads?

"Do I really need a helmet?" I asked innocently. "Ha, non, monsieur," said the engineer, "but I would not know when ze gravel hits you in ze face."

Oh fine, I'll take the helmet then. And, Heavens to Betsy, it was needed because any speed above 60mph felt like sticking

your head out of the open window of an RAF Phantom on a low level pass over Wales. But there was more to this fearless test: a spin around the Paul Ricard circuit in the competition version of the Spider. Renault plans its own races for Sport Spider owners,



The Renault Spider: the French company is prepared to push the boundaries of taste to a seldom explored limit

the little cars uprated by another 30bhp to blast around Europe's circuits.

Renault dressed me head to foot in baggy racing overalls and helmet, driving gloves and a modicum of hope, and set me off. Now this was a motor that blasted off the grid

like a rocket, had a non-synchronised racing gearbox and unassisted brakes — and it was being guided by a motorist with more in common with Willie Schumacher than Michael. But even I couldn't make enough high-speed mistakes to wrong-foot

the car. The slicks clung to the tarmac, clung to the steering wheel and the men from Renault clung to their mobile phones in case everything went wrong.

At least, there was no flying gravel, but I expect that the 75 Britons who have put a £5,000

RENAULT SPORT SPIDER

Body: Open two-seater, aluminium strengthened with composite materials.

Engine: 4-cylinder, 2-litre, 16-valve, as used in Renault's Clio Williams, set amidships for balance. Delivers 150bhp at 6000rpm (180bhp racing version).

Transmission: Five-speed manual (6-speed racing version).

Performance: 0 to 62mph in 6.9 seconds (6.2 racing version).

Top speed: 135mph. Not as fast as some, but it feels hair-raising — literally — from driver's position inches above the ground.

Economy: Don't ask.

Equipment: Hand-adjusted wing mirrors. That's it, no radio, no heater — bring your own helmet and thermals.

Price: est £25,000.

Hugh Hunston welcomes the latest offspring born of a Swedish-Japanese-Dutch manufacturing relationship

To Volvo: twins, both healthy

When Volvo's dynamic duo, the S40 saloon and its hatchback-estate car the V40, roll into British showrooms on May 28 the company will be moving into territory largely unexplored by the marque.

After a five-year gestation period, the Dutch-built twins are the product of a unique Euro-Japanese relationship between Volvo and Mitsubishi which also spawned the "other half" Carisma model, within the NedCar incubator.

But the good news is that the S40 and V40 are not clones of their Japanese half-cousin, even if parallel production facilities and crucial economies of scale from shared development were central to the project.

The saloon and wagon look like Volvos, in a fresh way, feel like Volvos, and they protect their occupants both actively and passively in a time-honoured fashion. Because most rivals have stolen Volvo's safety clothing the S and V40 are being pitched heavily on a combination of lifestyle and driving dynamics. They are aimed at the upper

medium car sector in Europe (everything from the Ford Mondeo to Audi A4 and BMW 3 Series) boasting 3 million potential buyers. In reality, Volvo's British clientele will be restricted to 7,000 this year because of right-hand drive production restrictions at the Born factory in Holland.

Although sharing the same outline platform with the Carisma, Volvo's life-preserving approach means the S and V40 have chassis strengthening and extra weight to match the structural strength of the larger 850 saloon and estate. The stiffer body shell should make for less noise and rattles, but pre-production V40s were afflicted by a squeak in the rear seatbelt mechanism. A senior engineer claimed

WD40 on the line would solve the problem.

Mounted in the now de rigueur transverse front-wheel-drive format, the petrol-powered cars use four-cylinder 1.8 and 2-litre engines producing 115bhp and 137bhp respectively with manual five-speed and automatic gearbox alternatives. A 1.9-litre 90bhp diesel option will arrive next January. Sharp and responsive handling and roadholding characteristics place them at least on a par with Audi and BMW rivals.

Underplayed at the launch was a standard "dynamic stability system" which electronically senses adhesion through the front-driven wheels and retards the power if they lose grip or spin. In layman's terms, it shuts off one cylinder in the engine, rendering the car a three-cylinder machine until normal service is resumed via the tarmac. Combining this with across the range anti-lock brakes emphasises accident avoidance as much as crash damage limitation.

Attention to detail includes improved dipped headlamps

effectiveness for the crucial vision range up to 75 metres in front of the car.

These Volvos are the first in class to incorporate side mounted airbags. Happily, these protective devices do not produce a sieve environment, and although the grey-trimmed interior lacks distinction it is a major improvement

on previous Volvos. Sportiness, youth appeal and vitality pepper the press blurb and testify to Volvo's avowed aim of bringing its ownership age profile down. Singles and young families are particular S and V40 target groups.

Volvo is playing for big stakes in the toughest high-volume sales arena. Englishman Peter Horbury, Volvo's resident styling guru, has elevated the chunky S40 and sleek V40 above most rivals. The Dutch-based Mitsubishi-Volvo link is likely to nurture an increasingly meaningful automotive relationship, which promises an expanding and varied family for both partners.



The S40 saloon: pitched on lifestyle and driving dynamics



The V40 hatchback: not a clone of its Japanese half-cousin

VOLVO S40/V40

Body styles: S40 4-door saloon, V40 5-door sports estate.

Engines: 1.8 (115bhp) and 2-litre (137bhp) aluminium 16-valve petrol units.

Performance: 0-62mph 10.8 seconds (1.8-litre manual). Max speed 121mph (1.8-litre for 2-litre).

Economy: S40 1.8-litre manual: urban cycle, 27.4mpg; constant 56mpg, 47.9mpg; constant 75mph, 39.2mpg. V40 2-litre auto: 23.5mpg, 40.4mpg; 33.2mpg.

Price: £14,000-£20,000.

What led to Jaguar's little local difficulties

Q I thought that British car exports were thriving. Why has Jaguar laid off a third of its workforce?

A The motor industry is subject to some strange variations at the moment. British factories sent 744,608 cars to export markets last year, a 20 per cent increase on the previous year and more than 48 per cent of total production. More than 1.5 million cars were made here, the best figure for 21 years.

Q And I thought I'd read about Jaguars' out-selling Ferraris in Italy.

A Jaguar sales throughout Europe last year were nearly 60 per cent higher than in 1994 at 7,230 against 4,653. In Italy the company sold 1,075 cars — twice as many as Ferrari sold.

Q So why has the company told 2,200 workers to go home for a week?

A While Europe is important, Jaguar's biggest ex-

port market is in the United States. Sales there were up 18 per cent last year, but last month they showed a severe slow-down. It seems that much talked about "feel-good" factor taking even longer to show in the US than here.

Q But I thought that after August, when the registration letter changes, January was the best month for car sales.

A Correct again, but on that basis 1996 doesn't look very promising. New registrations here in January were up just 0.3 per cent at 191,761. Imports took a 60.57 per cent share of the market.

Q So is the outlook for Jaguar gloomy?

A Not entirely. The real moment of truth will come at the Geneva Motor Show in March when Jaguar unveils its new XK8 sports car, grandchild of the E-type. If it succeeds like its predecessors, the Big Cat will be Top Cat again.

THE NEW MAZDA 626



(mazda) > (the rest)

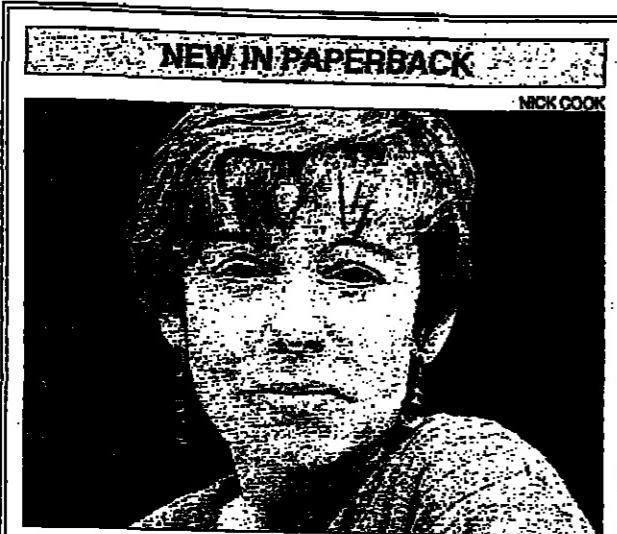
Good news
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Tell me more about
the new Mazda 626
0345 48 48 17

BOOKS

On the seedy side of sex



Armstrong: exploring the origins of Western misogyny

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO WOMAN

By Karen Armstrong

Fount, £5.99

ARMSTRONG, one-time nun-turned-teacher and full-time writer, is also the author of the best-selling *A History of God*. This work, first published in 1986, is a strongly worded and fascinating exploration of Christian neuroses and the origins of Western misogyny.

While never elevating other cultures at the expense of the West, one of her main points is that while Judaism and Islam are in many ways chauvinistic and repressive towards women, they do not preach sexual disgust the way Christianity does. In the first centuries after Christ, the Christian message was

mostly egalitarian. Gradually it was reinterpreted until the high-handed pronouncements on the status of women by St Paul became hysterical denunciations of female sexuality by the likes of St Jerome. The latter so revels in his own disgust that he seems a forerunner of the Victorians: the let's take another look at this just to remind ourselves how disgusting it really is! school of hypocrisy.

Armstrong examines the witch, the virgin, the martyr and the mystic: the different ways women are pigeonholed in order to be controlled, all the time relating her theories to the way we behave today, both consciously and unconsciously. An extremely enlightening if depressing read.

fine writer of fiction. His delicate second novel tenderly charts the life of Dr Bennett Lang, a physicist, whose mission in life is to produce the Perfect Baby through the development of a drug called Genetic Choice. Meanwhile at the Mankind Institute of Challenged Stability Hazel's widowed mother is living out other fantasies. Or are they fantasies? This extravagant black comedy dances hilariously around questions of definition and reality, ending with an orgy of female revenge. Jensen has a fine comic ear and her send-ups of psychotherapy, televangelism, drug marketing and genetic engineering are deliciously spot-on.

LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD

By Randall Kenan

Abacus, £6.99

SET in the close-knit, superstitious North Carolina farming community of Tims Creek, these 12 interwoven stories conjure up an elemental world in which the stark realities of poverty, racial tension and sexual betrayal are shot through with visions and fantasies. A place of golden cornfields and rocking chairs, Tims Creek is also the haunt of ghosts and angels — the spectres of lost loves, past crimes and disappointed dreams. Kenan writes with infinite compassion and lays bare the hearts and minds of his characters.

GOOD BENITO

By Alan Lightman

Sceptre, £5.99

LIGHTMAN, besides being a professor of science, is a

■ LOUIS MACNEICE

By Jon Stallworthy

Faber, £12.99

IN A LETTER to an Oxford friend in 1929 MacNeice described himself as "in some strange way hollow" that echoed the Zeitgeist. It is hard to think of him now without the other members of that 1930s triumvirate, Auden and Spender, or to free him from nostalgic associations with the wartime BBC. Jon Stallworthy does justice to MacNeice's originality and brings the charismatic Irishman alive — clever, ironic, "totally, irredeemably heterosexual" (as Anthony Blunt called him) and ultimately sad.

EMPTY CRADLES

By Margaret Humphreys

Corgi, £6.99

IF SOMEONE told you she was put on a boat to Australia, alone, at the age of four, you too might not believe it. For Margaret Humphreys, future founder of the Child Migrants Trust, this was only the first in a tidal wave of testimonies through which she came to understand and reveal the anguish of children — many told their parents were dead — who were shipped off to the British colonies, often to face physical and sexual abuse. A shocking tale of social engineering gone wrong, this is also an inspiring account of tireless commitment in the face of sloth and vested interest — and of unlimited compassion for its pawns.

Contributors: Tania Glyde, Hazel Leslie, Kate Bassett, Nicki Household, Alison Burns

BEFORE I rush off to have sex with my husband's boss, my best friend's boyfriend, the window cleaner, a gardener or two and myself, I would just like to say that all this concupiscent activity is not only entirely natural but is for the benefit of mankind. Furthermore, the spree will really have very little to do with me. The girl can't help it, you see. And neither can the boy. Our bodies have a mind of their own.

It is not the author's fault that he is an evolutionary biologist, any more than it is the reader's fault that she is not. But when a book has been so obviously targeted for a wide readership, the gulf between our conflicting visions of human relations is important. Perhaps this is what is meant by making science sexy. For what could

The real war of the sexes is fought on a microscopic scale, Ginny Dougray finds

SPERM WARS: Infidelity, sexual conflict and other bedroom battles

By Robin Baker

Fourth Estate, £7.99

be sexier, in theory, than sex itself? But *Sperm Wars*, like the pornography the author is so eager to distance himself from, not only takes the poetry out of love, it even takes the lyricism out of lust.

This book seeks to popularise the biological research conducted by Dr Robin Baker, the author, and Dr Mark Bellis, a former colleague of Baker at Manchester University.

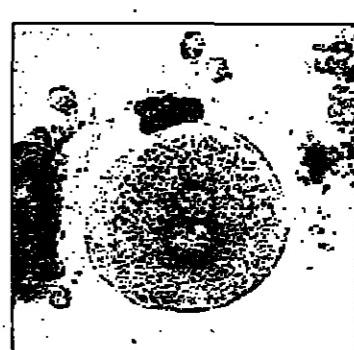
Like its scarcely less spicy-sounding scientific precursor, *Human Sperm Competition: copulation, masturbation and infidelity*, *Sperm Wars* aims to tell you everything you need to know about sperm. And much more.

There is nothing startling about its thesis that men are genetically programmed to conquer and women to breed. What is new is the quality and quantity of information on sperm (shape, size, character, motive, purpose), cervical mucus and the mysteries of the damp patch; all of which is intended to show that every sexual act — from masturbation to rape — is

predicated on the male's unconscious desire to knock his rival's more weedy sperm for six, and the female's complementary desire to collect the finest grade sperm available.

Much of the information in the first section of the book is riveting. (I had no idea that my cervix was quite so crafty or ingenious.) And the author certainly has a talent for making the mechanics of reproduction accessible: his image of the penis as a thrusting vacuum cleaner is quite unforgettable. But there is only so much one can absorb about egg-giving conquerors versus kamikaze troops without feeling like an old man in a grubby mac wanting to flick the pages to the dirty bits.

There is another problem, which the author seems to address in the



War front: fertilised human egg

section on rape. Darwinian science when applied to human beings can smack of a clinical, rather Hitlerian detachment. The woman who allows the stepfather of her children to violate her daughter and beat up her son, is "successful" because she also allows him to impregnate her with vigorous sperm. I have rarely found sex so depressing. But my body, of course, might think otherwise.

Capitalism with a human face

John Naughton on America's wealthiest ordinary Joe

OUTSIDE the City of London, most people in this country have probably never heard of Warren Buffett. In America, however, he has the status of a folk hero. This is because, despite being fabulously rich (second only to Bill Gates at current stock-market prices), he is also fantastically unpretentious. He dresses scruffily and lives in Omaha, which is closer to Deadsville than even Des Moines. He still resides in the house he bought in 1958 for \$31,500, drives his own car and drinks only Cherry Cola. The annual report of his company, Berkshire Hathaway, reads like something by Will Rogers out of J. P. Morgan. Indeed people buy a single Berkshire share (currently priced at more than \$16,000) simply to get a copy.

Buffett runs one of the biggest conglomerates in America from a modest office suite with a tiny staff and spends most of his day talking on the telephone or reading in an office which boasts neither a calculator nor a computer.

His only concession to executive hubris is a second-hand private jet — and even that was justified by claiming that scheduled flights had become difficult because of being pestered by fellow passengers seeking stock-market tips.

For Buffett is a genius at picking shares — the smartest punter in the history of the stock market. It is one thing to make a million bucks from an astute share deal or two, quite another to outperform the Dow index year in, year out. But Buffett has been doing this for more than 40 years, during which time he has never lost money for himself or his investors. For four decades he has been spotting stocks in public companies which were underpriced rela-

BUFFETT: The Making of an American Capitalist

By Roger Lowenstein

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20

tive to the "real" values of those companies, buying them cheap and watching them rise. In the process he has not only enriched himself but also those investors who spotted his potential early and stuck with him. And therein lies the secret of the Buffett legend, for he is the ultimate embodiment of the American dream — a combination of Forrest Gump and Midas.

Roger Lowenstein's admiring biography of this legendary figure tells a story that is almost too good to be true — about how an earnest, quiet schoolboy with a prodigious aptitude for numbers, an astonishing confidence in his own judgment and an obsession with accumulating money grew to become an investor with an unparalleled capacity for backing long-term winners. And the strangest aspect of the story is the sheer mundanity of Buffett's formulae, which is based on the idea that share price is generally a poor measure of the "underlying value" of a stock.

His trick was to ignore the day-to-day frothing of the markets and to scrutinise companies in order to identify which were properly run businesses with growth potential; and then to buy the stock and wait for stock-market valuation to catch up with the reality. The theory is simple, but practising it has evidently been beyond the reach of Wall Street's finest. What was needed, it seems, was the discipline, patience and invincible self-confidence which still defines Middle America — and its finest son, the inimitable Warren Buffett.



Heavy weather: on the seafront at Dover during the great storm of October 1987

Raining cats and frogs

SHUDDERING in the cruel east wind, what this country really needs is a chirpy weatherman to tell us that we ain't seen nothing yet. Fortunately, there is something about British weather communicators which makes them ineffably cheerful at all times. Meteorology, apparently, is so satisfying a science that it brings a certain chirruping contentment to its practitioners.

Paul Simons is no exception. *Weird Weather* is a chatty, sporadically instructive anthology of the extremes and oddities of climate. It tries half-heartedly to throw in serious bits about global warming and disaster, but keeps reverting to a tone I can only describe as gleeful. Heard about the shower of

WEIRD WEATHER

By Paul Simons

Little, Brown, £15.99

team? Do snowflakesinkle? And how did Second World War bomber bases disperse fog with oil drums? Did you know that San Francisco would have been discovered 200 years earlier but for the fog? Pay attention there, class — the fastest avalanche in the world was 217mph.

At first I found this book annoying. But I am British and so have succumbed totally. I shall talk of little else for weeks; for true Brits know that discussing weather, not the single European currency, is the way to happiness.

Or do you wonder about the will-o'-the-wisps, or why rain smells or whether it is true that St Elmo's fire once irritated a Dover school football

team? Do snowflakesinkle?

And how did Second World War bomber bases disperse

fog with oil drums? Did you

know that San Francisco

would have been discovered 200 years earlier but for the fog? Pay attention there, class — the fastest avalanche in the world was 217mph.

As an example of the greenie genre, *Angels Alone* is perfectly readable, well-constructed and mercifully unpredictable. In fact, I guessed the ending half-way through and I was wrong, which was much more fun than being right and is testimony to Kate Hatfield's abilities as a storyteller.

I found most of her characters indistinguishable from one another but I quite liked her authorial voice. Though she lacks the spark of true originality, Hatfield has true compassion for her characters, and that, at least, is more than can be said of this reader.

MARY LOUDON



Donnelly: low-key writing

CATCH THE WIND

By Frances Donnelly

Corgi, £5.99

see her as a symbol of swinging London and falls in love. Annie, who is a talented dress designer but has no confidence, slowly learns to trust herself. Alexia, Kit's lover, eventually flees his violence. Donnelly touches on the mixture of fear and shattered confidence that makes women stay with violent men. It takes a scene in which Kit smashes his newborn daughter's cradle and punches Alexia while she is holding the baby before Alexia can emerge from her numb passivity.

But although the events are dramatic, the writing is low-key and so *Catch the Wind* remains readable rather than absorbing. Donnelly has not yet achieved that difficult combination of strong story, tension, sparkle and pace that turns a good popular novel into a magnetic bestseller.

HELEN DUNMORE

Red cowboys, dead Indians

RELATING the make-believe world of the thriller to reality is a risky business. One route, mapped by Frederick Forsyth in *The Day of the Jackal*, is to set the action in the past, then reveal the "secret" story of how history almost crashed off the rails.

David Mason dealt in his first book *Shadow over Babylon* with a former SAS squad's assassination attempt on Saddam Hussein. In *Little Brother*, he reassembles some of that team in an effort to stop an assassination. The villains are the former East German secret police, the Stasi, now cast as hit-men-for-hire hanging out in North Korea.

This is rip-roaring macho stuff in the best Wilbur Smith tradition that bizarrely includes a plug for John Major that the No 10 PR boys would have killed for and enough

veteran with a horror of war and empathy with the Apaches, who make their living from a gambling casino in the New Mexico desert. When Finn finds out that the casino is being taken to the cleaners and Parsifal wonders why Moscow is interested in dead Indians, their interests collide.

They begin "walking back the cat", CIA slang for what John le Carré would call "taking the packbearings". But tracing the chain of command from the bottom up reveals disturbing parallels between the reactivated Russian network and the mafia-style casino shakedown. Not just the bad guys go off the rails, they discover.

This is an extraordinary thriller: challenging, brutal yet curiously optimistic, an offbeat epic about offbeat humanity.

THE WIG MY FATHER WORE

By Anne Enright

Minerva, £5.99

GRACE works on *The LoveQuiz* — an Irish TV show that is like *Blind Date* but not in nearly such good taste. She lives alone, having left home to escape her father's mild insanity and absurd wig, until into her frenzied, loveless world floats Stephen. Stephen, a very unethereal angel. Grace fancies him mad, but can't persuade him to make love to her, though he's wonderfully handy around the house. Stephen wants to appear on *The LoveQuiz*, so Grace fixes it, little guessing the havoc his angelic emanations will wreak. A witty, anarchic novel with a very original voice.

NEVER FAR FROM NOWHERE

By Andrea Levy

Headline Review, £12.99

racism of her council estate for the genteel racism of art college.

Olive's is a different tale. She is rebellious. She becomes trapped by poverty, sex and prejudice. She says: "When I was young, I used to look at my parents ... and think how lucky this country was to have them ... but even when I was young, I knew that English people hated us" — but she chooses to keep her head down, and thus escapes some of the traps of race, class and gender, exchanging the naked

discovery does no do her much good.

The blurb says that this book "will shake you with its raw energy". Novels about race and class that promise to do that are probably best avoided. This one, however, is much longer on intelligent restraint than it is on "raw energy". The story is well told, does not dodge complexity and rings true as an account of the fear and confusion felt by first-generation black English people 20 years ago. Above all Andrea Levy succeeds in showing how people respond to an identity imposed on them by others.

ROBERT CRAMPTON

RECORDINGS

NEW ON CD: *Sparkling Cost;*
Rachmaninov as nature intended;
Hounslow's Bluetones take wing;
Ben Webster swings with strings

OPERA

John Higgins

■ MOZART

Così fan tutte
Fleming/von Otter/
Scarabelli/Lopardo/Bär/
Purtsch/Chamber Orchestra
of Europe/Solti

Decca 444 174-2 (3 CDs)★★★
WEARY, perhaps of the demands of stage directors. Sir Georg Solti has recently turned to concert opera. In the spring of 1994, he took the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and six wisely chosen soloists on a brief tour of *Così fan tutte* through France and Germany before ending with two nights at the Festival Hall. On arrival in London, the team was sparkling together so well that 90 per cent of this Decca recording is taken from the first of that pair of performances.



Fleming: outstanding

Here is sunlit Solti. Except during Fiordiligi's Act II aria, *Per pietà*, he adopts quicksilver tempos, using the lightest of touches with his small and expert band of players. Solti steers well clear of the current habit of peering into the darker corners of *Così* and prefers to see the Mozart-dà-Ponte wager of constancy as a comedy of youthful indiscretion. Everyone concerned will learn to live and love another day. The score is complete, but with the verbal exchanges taken at staccato speed the opera is over in under three hours, including some Festival Hall applause. In the theatre, even with cuts, it has all too often seemed much, much longer.

Solti's previous *Così* for Decca was not one of his best recordings and suffered from an unduly staid Fiordiligi (Lorengar). He makes no such mistakes this time round. Renée Fleming begins a bit cautiously in the role but quickly warms up. *Per pietà* is quite outstanding. Frank Lopardo's Ferrando is easily his best performance on disc to date: the honeyed mezzo voice of *Un aura amara*.

with each note carefully suspended in position, can turn to affronted male rage in Act II. Ferrando and Fiordiligi are always the stormy petrels of the love game, while Anne Sofie von Otter and Olaf Bär stay ready to play the complaisant couple. She teases and surrenders; he persuades and conquers.

The beginning of Act II is filled with the ripple of feminine laughter as Despina tells her mistresses about the real world. Adelina Scarabelli has a bit of edge to her tone, but this contrasts well with the sisters' trilling away like a couple of lovebirds. Michele Perusini casts tradition aside to offer a young and forceful Don Alfonso. Next month he re-opens the old Paris Opéra in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, a concert performance with Solti conducting. *Giovanni*, with some cast changes, comes to the Festival Hall with Solti in the autumn and the recording engineers will be there. On the evidence of this witty and dashing *Cost*, we should stay tuned.

CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

■ RACHMANINOV

Sonata No 2, etc
Zoltan Kocsis
Philips 446 220-2★★★

JUST as, in the case of Bartók, Zoltan Kocsis has been putting his own imagination and intelligence to thrilling effect against the composer's own from manuscript and piano roll, so now he turns to Rachmaninov. Both in his playing and in his own accompanying notes, Kocsis makes a strong case for this original 1913 version of the Sonata No 2. Rachmaninov's 1931 revision, with its numerous cuts and awkward transitions, reduced the work to little more than an outline. Here is the piece in its full rhapsodic glory, and Kocsis has both the technique and the intellect to bring it off.

So deeply thought out is his performance that he has the freedom to unfold the music as if it were an improvisation. This is so vital in Rachmaninov where, as Kocsis himself puts it, "the work and its interpretation are all of a piece". Kocsis fills out this recital with enthralling performances of six Preludes, three Etude-Tableaux and two Morceaux de fantaisie.

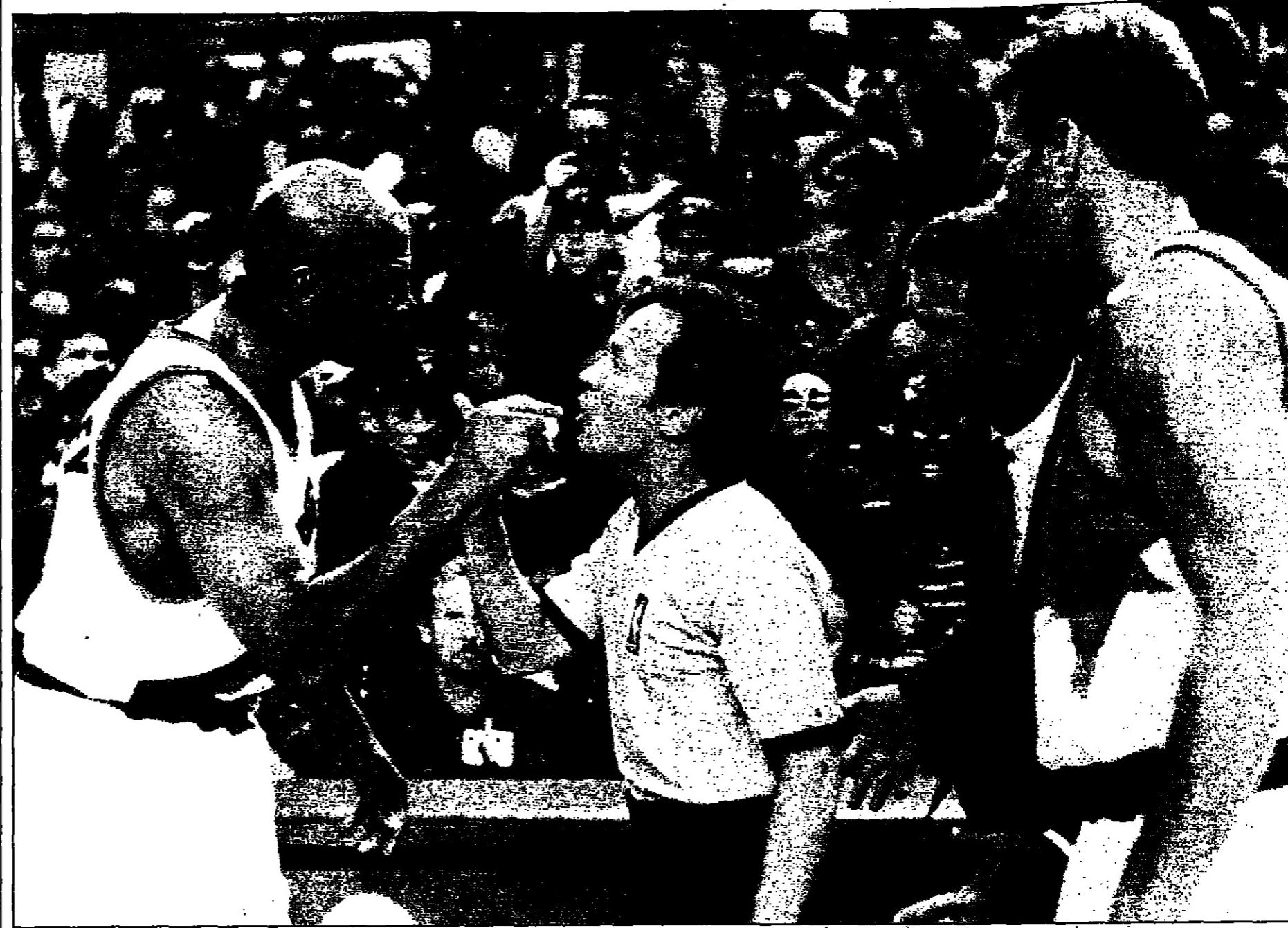
■ RACHMANINOV

Complete Songs Vol 1
Leiferkus/Rodgers/
Shelley, etc
Chandos CHAN 9405★★★

CHANDOS has assembled

some of Rachmaninov's finest interpreters for a complete

NEW ON VIDEO: Paris with no heart; Audrey Hepburn on the brink of stardom; *Usual Suspects* in the clear

Scoring no points: Billy Crystal plays a smug, selfish basketball referee but fails to make the audience care about a curiously moribund love story in *Forget Paris***■ FORGET PARIS**

Columbia Tristar, 12, 1995

CAN Billy Crystal and Debra Winger make their love affair stick? Do we care? Not much, partly because the stars never seem to be two hearts beating as one. Why would Winger, an airline executive, ever contemplate bliss with Crystal's smug, selfish basketball referee? The Paris we see is the movie creation: tourist traps, locals in berets. On the brighter side, the script's portrayal of urban angst brings Woody Allen pleasurable to mind. A rental release.

■ FARAWAY, SO CLOSE!

Connoisseur, 18, 1994

WIM WENDER'S sequel to *Wings of Desire*. Some stretches are capi-

tating, though you still need the patience of Job to survive two and a half hours of extreme whimsy, pastiche thriller and visits from the likes of Mikhail Gorbachev, Peter Falk and Lou Reed. Otto Sander's angel casts a kindly eye around the unfriendly city and takes on mortal form: but the deeper he delves into human life, the more cumbersome Wenders's conceits grow. Ravishing photography helps.

■ I LOVE A MAN IN UNIFORM

Tartan, 18, 1993

MILD bank clerk and part-time actor becomes a television cop and takes his uniform home. Out on the streets in black leather, he finds the power life otherwise denied him. Canadian director David Welling-

ton plays clever games with our fascination with television violence and sneaks plenty of dark humour into the edgy scenes. Stage actor Tom McCamus is riveting as the hero led off the rails by his lust for order. No masterpiece, but a striking film with a taut disposition and a mind of its own.

■ ROMAN HOLIDAY

CIC, U, 1953

GREGORY PECK'S American newspaperman falls for a princess in disguise: a slim, whimsical story once earmarked for Frank Capra and fattened up by director William Wyler, who insisted on shooting in Rome and never lets us forget it. But it is an admirable showcase for young Audrey Hepburn. In one

bound she leaps from British bits to Hollywood stardom and an Oscar.

■ THE SLINGSHOT

Connoisseur, 12, 1993

AKE SANDGREN'S oddball Swedish film whisks us to Stockholm in the 1920s, where a sensitive but resilient child suffers school persecution, family strife, and peers up his first female skirt. The film, from an autobiographical novel, is never boring, but Sandgren's staid brand of image-making rubs away some of the characters' sharp edges, and it never matches its obvious forerunner, *My Life as a Dog*. The title comes from a corruption the hero makes from a little bent wire and two condoms.

■ THE USUAL SUSPECTS

PolyGram, 18, 1995

JOIN Special Agent Chazz Palminteri as he tries to disentangle the threads that bind five criminals and lead to a dockside fire and 27 dead bodies. The plot is complex but director Bryan Singer keeps it moving with an authority and bold style worlds removed from the static cleverness of his only other film, *Public Access*. The action at times burns the screen but there is room for careful characterisations, and the strong cast — including Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne and Stephen Baldwin — relish their opportunities. One of the top American films of last year. Available to rent.

GEOFF BROWN



Ozawa: exhilarating sweep

to a retro formula of guitars, drums and voices, their debut album, *Expecting to Fly*, has a comfortingly familiar sound.

On songs such as *Things Change* and *Time & Again*,

Adam Devilin's guitar playing encompasses the chiming grace of Johnny Marr and the choppy aggression of Pete Townshend, while singer Mark Morris plies his tales of romantic whimsy with a clean-cut voice, making a pleasing virtue out of his long, southern-English vowels.

Disillusionment is a recurring theme — "I'm not the same person I was a year ago/You cut me deeply and the scars still show" — but, typically, it is music that turns a downcast mood into something uplifting.

Their fondness for pop melody, and the care with which the songs are written and arranged, means that they stray, at times, a little too close to the bland tunesmithery of the Beautiful South. But on harder numbers, such as the ambitious *Talking to Clary* and *Cut Some Rug* (imagine the Stone Roses with a proper singer), there is a rare brilliance at work.

But the lion's share of the

tions as "Why does Wednesday come after Tuesday?", and his involvement alone will guarantee that this album will sell.

But their tendency to play safe means that, despite their obvious talent, the Ts sound as if they have been captured in an early middle-age.

Clive Davis

■ BEN WEBSTER

Music For Loving

Verve 52774 (2 CDs)★★★
DOES an improviser as lush and melodic as Ben Webster require any help from an orchestral arranger? In an ideal world, he would be left to explore *Chesterfield Bridge* or *Early Autumn* in the company of an unadorned rhythm section with, say, Harry Edison blowing a wobbly obbligato.

Most writing for strings resolutely refuses to do anything so indecorous as swing, so it would be natural to assume that draping Webster's saxophone in violins would have unhappy consequences. It ain't necessarily so, as this assortment of mid-1950s sessions makes plain.

If an orchestra must be drafted in, then Ralph Burns and Billy Strayhorn's arrangements are probably the most tasteful anyone could hope for. Seldom obtrusive or syrupy, they furnish subtle rhythmicics and figures behind Webster's billowing tenor. That said, it still comes as a relief to reach the handful of tracks where he is matched with just Teddy Wilson, Ray Brown and Jo Jones. This decidedly off-beat double album concludes with a suave orchestral selection composed for that other distinguished Ellingtonian, Harry Carney.

■ FOURTH WORLD

Encounters of the Fourth World

B-W Music 2045★★★
WHEN they first came to Ronnie Scott's many moons ago, Airto Moreira's band of percussion-driven fusionists seemed on the verge of inventing a whole new Latin jazz vocabulary. As the years went by the tone grew more bombastic, the lyrical José Neto slowly turning into a big bad axe-hero. By the time this live recording was made in Amsterdam, almost exactly a year ago, the hyperactivity quotient was still extremely high, but on the rare occasions when Neto throned back, you still feel yourself in the presence of a remarkable talent.

Ocean Colour Scene return



Ocean Colour Scene return

credit for this great single belongs to the group itself.

Fuelled up with an authentic 1960s rock sound, *The Riverboat Song* boasts an insistent, hustling rhythm whipped along by splashes of wah-wah guitar and a hyperactive pair of maracas.

"I see trouble up the road," Simon Fowler sings in his high, throaty voice, as neurotic squalls of rattle and burn nip at the heels of the tune. Packed with energy, it is a song that will surely set them back on the road to greater things.

* Worth hearing

** Worth considering

*** Worth buying

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE HISTORIC PROPERTY

Audley End House, a Jacobean mansion in Essex, one of 16 short-listed properties

The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards

Since the launch of the National Heritage Awards last autumn, readers of *The Times* have nominated more than 160 properties which they consider to be the best in the British Isles.

The awards, in association with pensions specialist NPI, now moves onto the voting stage and today we publish a voting form, right, containing the 16 short-listed finalists. You can also vote for *The Times* Family award, by selecting a property you consider makes a special effort to entertain and inform adults and children.

The winning property will be presented with a crystal trophy by Lord Inglewood, under secretary of state at the Department of National Heritage, at a gala reception in London in April. By registering your vote, you will automatically be entered into a prize draw for the chance to attend the ceremony with a guest. Coffee table books illustrating historic buildings, worth £20 each, will go to 20 runners-up.

Post the voting form to:

The Times/NPI National Heritage Awards, Spero Communications, Grampian House, Meridian Gate, Marsh Wall, London E14 9XT. Closing date is Saturday, March 2, 1996.



NPI NATIONAL HERITAGE AWARDS

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Day tel _____

I would like to vote for the following properties.

Please mark 1, 2 and 3 in the spaces provided.

1 being the overall winner, 2 the runner-up, and 3 third place.

Audley End House	Dover Castle
Blickling Hall	Ford Abbey
Bolsover Castle	Fountains Abbey
Brodsworth Hall	Hampton Court
Chartwell	Harewood House
Chatsworth	Hever Castle
Cotehele	Stokesay Castle
Cuzban Castle	Warwick Castle

The Times Family Award

Please tick one only

Bolsover Castle	Dover Castle
Brodsworth Hall	Fountains Abbey
Chatsworth	Warwick Castle

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

■ THE BLUETONES

Expecting to Fly

Superior Quality

Recordings/ASM

BLUE 003★★★

DESPITE the scramble by the latest wave of groups to dissociate themselves from the dog-eared Britpop tag, the charabanc rolls on. And if the Bluetones are not an example of a new British band playing fine pop music, then it is hard to think who is.

Four earnest young men from Hounslow who have already been declared the great pale hopes of 1996 on the basis of a handful of singles, they offer plenty of passion, though nothing in the way of innovation. Sticking primarily

■ ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

■ TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No 4

OUTDOORS

15

JULIAN HERBERT



Fields of dreams become a thousand village greens

Oliver Gillie on millennium plans to establish green havens all over Britain

Elizabeth Soulsby came to Stanford in the Vale, an Oxfordshire village, by chance—and immediately fell in love. Sheep were grazing on a field in front of the church and the old manor house. It was the English rural idyll she had been searching for after spending years in Africa.

"I was struck by the beauty of the scene," says Mrs Soulsby, "and immediately felt that nothing must ever be allowed to spoil it."

She bought a house in the village, was elected to the parish council, and found that one of the first items on the agenda was how the parish could buy the field in front of the church. The asking price, then £35,000, was beyond the resources of the parish. Mrs Soulsby sought help and was referred to the Countryside Commission, which is hoping to set up a scheme with the Millennium Fund to establish 1,000 new greens in villages, towns and cities throughout the country.

Stanford in the Vale is a picture-book village with a 12th-century church and houses built of local stone—some of them thatched, others using local slate. It overlooks the Vale of White Horse, the Downs and the ancient Ridgeway road to the south. The area is steeped in history. According to the *Wessex Chronicles*, King Alfred rode his horse in the "Western Valley"—probably the valley of the

White Horse. But Stanford in the Vale is not a community of retired people wanting to preserve the old at the expense of the new. As well as traditional stone houses, there are several hundred other dwellings built by the council before and after the war, many of which are now owner-occupied. The village owns a leisure field which is used primarily by the local football club, but there is no cricket pitch.

"We are in the middle of the most beautiful countryside, but there is nowhere for children to play or for old people to sit and enjoy the sunshine on a summer day," Mrs Soulsby says.

But now it looks as if the field beside the church will soon belong to the village residents. It is one of 23 "millennium greens" established by the Countryside Commission as a pilot project. The Commission hopes to obtain support from the Millennium Fund to finance 1,000 before the year 2000. The Commission is providing half of the money and looks to other sources to provide the rest. A legal agreement will be made to protect the land for future generations. If the land were to be taken over for any other purpose, such as roads or housing, equivalent land would have to be provided elsewhere in the village.

The owner of the field, Hubert Howse, has brought down his price to £27,500, and the Countryside



Top: the field in the Oxfordshire village of Stanford in the Vale that will soon belong to residents. Above: an industrial site in Dormanstown, Cleveland, will also benefit from a millennium green

Commission has agreed to provide half the cost of buying and developing the field. It will be improved by the planting of trees and a hedge. Seating will be installed at one end, where parents can wait before collecting their children from the primary school next door, and at the other end, next to the ancient manor wall, there is a raised area which might be used as a stage for plays or prize-givings.

Millennium greens will be small havens for birds, trees and hedge-row creatures, but most of all they will be havens for human beings. They are conceived as spaces where people will enjoy informal leisure

pursuits, such as kicking a ball around with their children, playing cricket, throwing frisbees or flying kites.

Many of the millennium greens will be in densely populated city areas—some dominated by industry. Areas such as Dormanstown, near Redcar, Cleveland, which is situated midway between the former Dorman Long's steelworks (now British Steel) and ICI's Wilton works. Dormanstown was built in the 1920s as a garden city—a brave attempt to make the area attractive. But either the planners lost confidence, or ran out of money, because many of the trees that were

supposed to line the wide avenue roads were never planted.

Now Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is planning to create a millennium green on a space where old houses have been cleared. The site will be landscaped and planted with native trees, shrubs and wild flowers, which will defy the maze of pipework and chemical storage tanks a few hundred yards away. The green will provide a safe play area for children and a gateway to the proposed Cleveland community forest.

Walking south from the green at Dormanstown, a hiker crosses

farmland soon to be forest and can follow an old bridle track past Lazebury bank up to the Exton Hills, where there are views of the North Sea to the east. To the south there is open country leading to the North Yorkshire Moors—an area of wilderness stretching 25 miles to the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey in the south and Robin Hood's Bay in the east.

Whether or not millennium greens will become village greens in the legal sense will, it seems, be a matter for local people to decide. The law allows the greens to be used for agricultural shows for up to 12 days a year and, if the town or village has a right to have a market, they might also be used for stalls selling crafts.

The land for several of the millennium greens has been donated by local authorities. However, these authorities sometimes don't want areas which they may intend to develop for housing to be tied up as village greens. It took Jim Briggs and his friends in Aldwick, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex, eight years to get a piece of land owned by Arun District Council registered as a village green. The land at Aldwick was a meadow left open when surrounding land was developed for private housing in 1967. As required by the Town and Country Planning Act, the meadow was destined to become the property of the local authority.

Following administrative delays, however, it was not taken over by the council until 1987, by which time it had been used by residents for leisure purposes for 20 years.

Local people applied for the land to be recognised as a village green but were opposed by Arun Council, which wished to retain it as a realisable asset. After the first application failed, local people took advice from the Open Spaces Society and, in a second application four years later, evidence of 20 years' leisure use of the meadow was accepted and it was registered as a village green.

The advantage of registration is that it confers certain rights of use for recreation which do not alter with a change of ownership, and it reduces the chances of the land being used for building development. Some 33 new greens throughout England have been registered since 1990, when it became easier because a 20-year period had elapsed since the Commons Registration Act. Although most of the planned new greens will be only a few acres in size, it reverses the trend of the past 200-300 years, which has seen common land steadily enclosed by private owners.

• The Countryside Commission has an information pack for anyone interested in applying for funds for a millennium green. Write to: Millennium Greens, The Countryside Commission, 71 Kingsway, London WC2B 8QST.

• Getting Greens Registered—a guide to law and procedure, £9 inc p&p, is available from the Open Spaces Society, 25a Bell Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 2BA.

SAILING: If you don't know an injector from an impeller, engine lessons may save your life

Rescue for the mechanically challenged

If, like me, you go to sea to sail, to use the power of the wind and the tide, you probably regard the engine on your boat with a mixture of awe and trepidation.

Without it you can't get in and out of marinas; picking up moorings, especially in a tide-way, can be challenging; and when the wind dies on you on a Sunday night and you are trying to get to work on Monday, you might just be facing one of those embarrassing calls to the office. And, crucially, engines can help to get you out of trouble.

Despite the degree to which we depend on engines, many sailors—experienced ones at that—know little about them.

You only have to ask the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Its statistics for lifeboat call-outs reveal that 34 per cent of all launchings to sail and powered pleasure-craft result from simple mechanical failure, and the proportion of those call-outs is increasing every year.

As long as we pay our dues to the AA or RAC, we can get away with almost total ignorance of what is going on under our car bonnet. But in the middle of the North Sea, it's just you, your spares and your engine.

As a former dinghy sailor with a distaste for mechanical matters, I needed an introduction to the diesel on my boat, *Vutcracker*. Having spent £5,000 on a new Yanmar three-cylinder during her refit last year, and a pile more laying it put in, I had no leisure to wreck it through ignorance.

The Essex Sailing School in

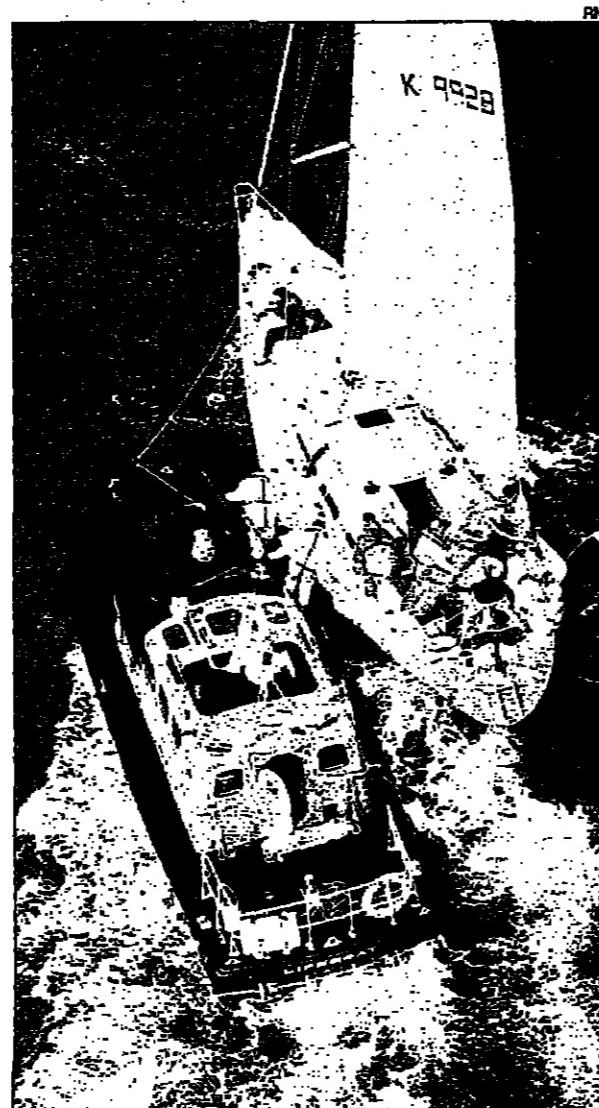
shores of the Blackwater estuary, is among many schools offering Royal Yachting Association-recognised one-day diesel courses for recreational sailors. The school runs around six courses a year, usually for about six students at a time, at £50 a head.

Mike Tyrrell, the school's principal and an engineer, believes the course is imperative for anyone embarking on the RYA's navigation and general seamanship programmes, such as the Day Skipper certificate. The aim is to give people an idea of their engine system, to avoid faults that they themselves have caused, to show which spare parts to carry and how to solve simple problems at sea—so avoiding the need to go to a workshop or to call out a lifeboat.

On my day at the school there were two other "students", Anne and Malcolm Gilding, who have owned boats for years but, like so many of us, had found a long list of reasons to put off getting to know their heat exchanger from their manifold.

It was an incident near their holiday home at Puerto Andraitx in Majorca, where they keep their Llaud—a 21ft, double-ended traditional Spanish fishing boat—that finally persuaded them to go back to school. A young couple in a speedboat suffered engine failure within sight of land but, unable to mend it themselves, were blown offshore and spent three days at sea, suffering severe dehydration, before they were picked up by a fishing boat.

"I've always put it off," said



Many lifeboat call-outs are for simple mechanical failure

Mr Gilding as he settled down to examine the school's demonstration engine block, complete with cut-away sections for ease of access and viewing. "But I'm glad we've got round to it. All our friends laughed when I said I was taking my wife on a diesel-engine course, but I could be ill or have an accident on the boat. I think the more Anne knows, the better."

Under Mr Tyrrell's tutelage, we spent a surprisingly inter-

esting day getting to grips with the "suck, squeeze, bang, blow" cycle of the diesel engine, the mysteries of direct or indirect injection, the vital role of oil in the engine, the fuel system and how to bleed it, the cooling system and the general dos and don'ts of marine engines.

Did you know, for example, (I didn't) that diesels are best put to work immediately they are turned on, and that warming them up in neutral for 20

minutes before you leave your mooring does them more harm than good? It's when you return after sailing that it should be left to tick over for a while before you turn it off.

By the end of the day we were talking about fine filters, injectors, the gallery, impellers and the governor. We even had tricky test questions such as: "If the thermostat is stuck in the closed position, what part of the engine would overheat first?" Answer: the cylinder head.

Mrs Gilding admitted that it was a lot more fun and easier to understand than she had expected. She also found it very useful. "I've always been a little wary about the engine. I used to think in the back of my mind that if it stopped, I wouldn't really know what to do. This has given me more confidence. Serious things can go wrong, but if it's just a hose going or something simple, then we should be able to cope."

The RYA hopes that more and more people will attend the courses, not only to cut down the number of lifeboat call-outs to boats with often minor mechanical failure but to improve general standards of seamanship.

Unfortunately, though, it seems only the more conscientious types are doing the course. As John Hart, for 15 years coxswain of the Barry Lifeboat, who helped to devise the course, put it: "The most irresponsible people who need instruction are the ones who don't do the course. There's no allowance for the lunatic few whatever courses you put together or legislation you bring to bear."

EDWARD GORMAN

For information about RYA-recognised engine courses, contact Jane Keohane at the RYA on 01703 622454. Similar courses are also provided by leading engine manufacturers, including Volvo Penta (01923 228544), Perkins (01733 582408), and Sabre (01202 893720).

Next week: the superyacht

Beware the invasion of the berry snatchers

Feather report

Waxwings catch snowflakes



Waxwings catch snowflakes

yellow tip to the tail looks golden when the sun shines through it.

All the members of the flock sit quietly together in the bushes; then there is a flurry of berry-snatching, after which they all subside again. I

DERWENT MAY

What's about? *Birders*—listen for the song of the chaffinch in woodpecker and parrot.

Twitchers—a pine bunting at Halesowen, West Midlands; a long-billed dowitcher at Copperhouse Creek, Cornwall.

Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 30p a minute cheap rate, 50p at all other times.

When is a shop not a shop?



Always on Page 2
and in Weekend Money

BRITAIN: The haunting landscape of the Fens; ideas for entertaining children at half term ...

Winter in waterland

Imagine a landscape so flat and featureless that even the hedges stand out. Picture the setting sun hanging in an endless sky. Then look towards the horizon to see an 11th-century cathedral seemingly floating above the fields.

This is the scene as you approach Ely across the Fens. Medieval travellers met an even more dramatic sight — Ely Cathedral, the "ship of the Fens", rising out of the reeds on its island fortress.

Nowadays Ely (el island) is an isle no more and the waters that have shaped East Anglia are temporarily tamed by science. But the flat Fen landscape, with a windmill here, a church there, can still exercise a powerful hold on the imagination.

Anyone who has read Graham Swift's *Waterland* will feel echoes of it on a winter morning as the mist rises from the sodden soil.

Fenlanders once lived their lives on the water — they shot wildfowl, caught eels, dug peat and cut down reeds to build stilt houses. All that changed in the 17th century when drainage schemes rescued the Fens from the sea, creating



The Normans started work on Ely Cathedral in 1081

England's richest area of farmland and altering the landscape for ever. But still there is a sense that nature will have the last word.

To see the Fens as they once were visit Wicken Fen, south of Ely. England's oldest nature reserve and a rare area of undrained fenland.

Ten miles of boggy footpaths lead you alongside lodes (canals which were once the area's main transport routes) and past the Fens' sole remaining wind pump to a group of "bog oaks", entombed in peat for 4,000 years until they turned up in 1980 in a nearby field. The National Trust con-

tinues traditional Fenland practices here, cutting sedge, reed and peat and using them wherever possible. Walk around the reserve, then into the surrounding farmland to see how the area has changed since drainage.

Wicken Fen attracts a good variety of wildlife but serious bird-watchers must visit the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust's centre at Welney. A third of Europe's wild swans winter here on the Ouse Washes beside the Hundred Foot Drain, one of two parallel canals cut in the 17th century to divert the course of the Ouse. Most are Whooper and Bewick's swans, migrants from Iceland and Russia.

From November to February you can see the swans under floodlight. At the height of winter you might see 3,000 of them. Go at dusk to watch them in flight, returning to their night-time resting-place.

But wherever you go in the Fens you are always drawn back to Ely. The city was founded in 673 AD by St Etheldreda, daughter of the East Anglian king, who received the island as a dowry. Her first husband died, her second marriage failed, and she retired to a hilltop retreat to establish an abbey on the site of today's cathedral.

Hereward the Wake used Ely as his last line of defence against William the Conqueror. But the Normans won, took the town, and in 1081 began building the cathedral — the main reason for visiting Ely today.

The highlight is the 14th-century octagonal lantern, 400 tons of lead and wood, providing a night-time beacon visible for miles. But I have a soft spot for the Lady Chapel, England's largest, completed by Alan of Walsingham in 1322. Beheaded saints, defaced during the Reformation, line the walls; childlike images of Adam and Eve adorn the ceiling.

The cathedral contains an excellent stained glass museum, its exhibits from 1240 (the oldest glass in England) to whimsical modern pieces, all well-lit, carefully explained and in a lovely setting.

TONY KELLY

• Where to stay: Lamb Hotel, Ely (01353 663374) — double £88, F&B.

• Black Hostelry — medieval monks' inn in grounds of Ely Cathedral (01353 662612). Double £58, F&B.

• Where to eat: Dominiques, St Mary's Street, Ely (01353 665011) — good snack lunches plus three-course evening meals. Wed-Sat 7pm, £16.50. No smoking/credit cards.

• Old Fire Engine House, Palace Green, Ely (01353 662582) — traditional English restaurant with art gallery. Three-course meal approx £23.

Monsters, masks and myths

LONDON

Masker in Action! Members of the Seventeenth Century Heritage Group re-enact the masque from the days of the Stuart court. *The Banqueting House*, Whitehall (0171-920 4789), Feb 21-24, 10am-4pm. Adults £3, children £2.

Brown Rabbit Visits Africa: More classic tales using marionettes. *Puppet Theatre Barge Little Venice*, Blomfield Road, W9 (0171-249 6876), Daily, Feb 17-25, 3pm. Adults £5.50, children £3.

Eighteenth Century London Workshop: Explore how people lived and try crafts used to make objects in the home. *Geffrye Museum*, Kingsland Road, E2 (0171-39 9893), Feb 20-23, 10am-12.45pm and 2-4pm. Free but donations requested for materials. ☎

Mini-beastie: What happens when a little girl is shrunk to the size of an insect? Also Thumelina's puppet show for three to five-year-olds.

Puppet Theatre for Children, 240 The Broadway, SW19 (0181-543 4888), Feb 8 to April 6. Times vary. Adults and children £6.50. ☎ Thumelina: Feb 20-24, Times vary. Adults and children £3.50.

Cinema Club: Cartoons and other children's favourites on half-term Saturday and Sunday weekend. *The Brixton Silk Street*, E2 (0171-639 8891), Every Saturday, 2.30. Adults £3.50, children £1.75. ☎

Cinema Club: Cartoons and other children's favourites on half-term Saturday and Sunday weekend. *The Brixton Silk Street*, E2 (0171-639 8891), Every Saturday, 2.30. Adults £3.50, children £1.75. ☎

Drama and Crafts Workshop: Run by Stop the Clock Theatre. Includes movement, music and drama for five to seven-year-olds. Myths, Monsters and Masks for eight to ten-year-olds.

ABC Lavender Hill, Battersea, SW11 (0171-223 2223). Feb 19-23. Mornings for the younger age group, afternoons for the older. £25.50 for whole week, concessions for children of unemployed/students. ☎ Feb 19-23 from 10am-3pm. Adults £2.50, children £1.50. ☎

Avalon: *Budding Snappers*: Introduction to Black and White Photography and Printing. Two-day non-residential workshop run by the Royal Photographic Society in different venues around Britain from February 19-20 for 11 to 16-year-olds. Price £36. Contact the RPS on 01225 462841. Not suitable for the disabled. See also Wiltshire for similar event.

BEDFORDSHIRE

Fantastic Fun: Arts and crafts, racket games, bouncing castles and prizes suitable for seven to 14-year-olds.

Bunyan Sports Centre, Mile Road, Bedford (01234 364481). Feb 19-23, 9.15am to 4.15pm. Half-day sessions £1.60, day £3. Bring a packed lunch. ☎ (but telephone first)

BERKSHIRE

More Adventures Of Noddy: Whatever will Enid Blyton's hero get up to next?

The Hexagon, Queenswalk, Civic Centre, Reading (01734 591591). Feb 21-24 at varying times. Adults and children from £5.50. ☎

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Kids Time: A three-day programme for 5 to 12-year-olds with drama, arts, crafts, parachute games, unhoc and video filming.

Stoke Mandeville Community Hall, Stoke Mandeville (01296 629993). Feb 21-23, 8.15am-3.30pm. £10 a day or £10 to half day. ☎ (but ring first).

Make Totem Poles using waste material. Eight-year-olds upwards. The workshop will tour villages in the north of the county. Details on different times and places (01926 555210). Feb 19-23 from 10am-3pm. Adults £11. ☎

HAMPSHIRE

Beyond The North Wind: Puppet and story-telling show.

Storybox Theatre, The Tower, Romsey Road, Winchester (01926 865980). Feb 19-23, 10am-4pm. Adults £12.50, children £6. ☎

DERBYSHIRE

Children's Week: Steam trains and farm park.

Midland Railway Centre, Butterley Station, Ripley, Derby (01773 746764). Feb 19-23, 9.15am to 4.15pm. Half-day sessions £1.60, day £3. Bring a packed lunch. ☎ (but ring first).

DORSET

Keep Busy: Roller-skating rink, dry ski slope, crazy golf, mountain bikes and more.

Parkdean Holidays.

Warmwell Leisure Resort, near Weymouth (01963 224 0500). £150 for seven nights in one-bedroom lodges, sleeping up to four. ☎ (but ring first).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Rocky Road Show: Learn about rocks, crystals and fossils.

Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens, Stranmillis Road, Belfast (01223 351251). Feb 18-24, 2-4pm. Feb 19-23, 10am-3pm. Adults £7.50, children £5. Family ticket £12.50, two adults and two children. ☎

OXFORDSHIRE

Something To Do On A Wet Sunday Afternoon: Children's show featuring circus skills.

The Courtyard Theatre, Dough Road, Newnham Abbey, near Bellast (01223 848287). Feb 18-23, 10am-4pm. Adults and children £3. ☎

SCOTLAND

Pirates Afloat at the Deep Sea World: Pirata Exhibition in a show for friends and family.

The Tower, Romsey Road, Winchester (01962 867986). Feb 19-23, 10am-4pm. Adults £10. ☎ (but ring first).

SCOTLAND

Spread Your Wings: Four-day drama workshop culminating in a show for friends and family.

The Tower, Romsey Road, Winchester (01962 867986). Feb 19-23, 10am-4pm. Adults £10. ☎ (but ring first).

SCOTLAND

Half-term Activities: Story-telling, dressing-up and nature trails.

Leeds Castle, Maidstone (01622 765400). February 19-25, 10am to 3pm. Adults £7.50, children £5. Family ticket £12.50, children £10.50. Family ticket £21 (two adults and two children). ☎

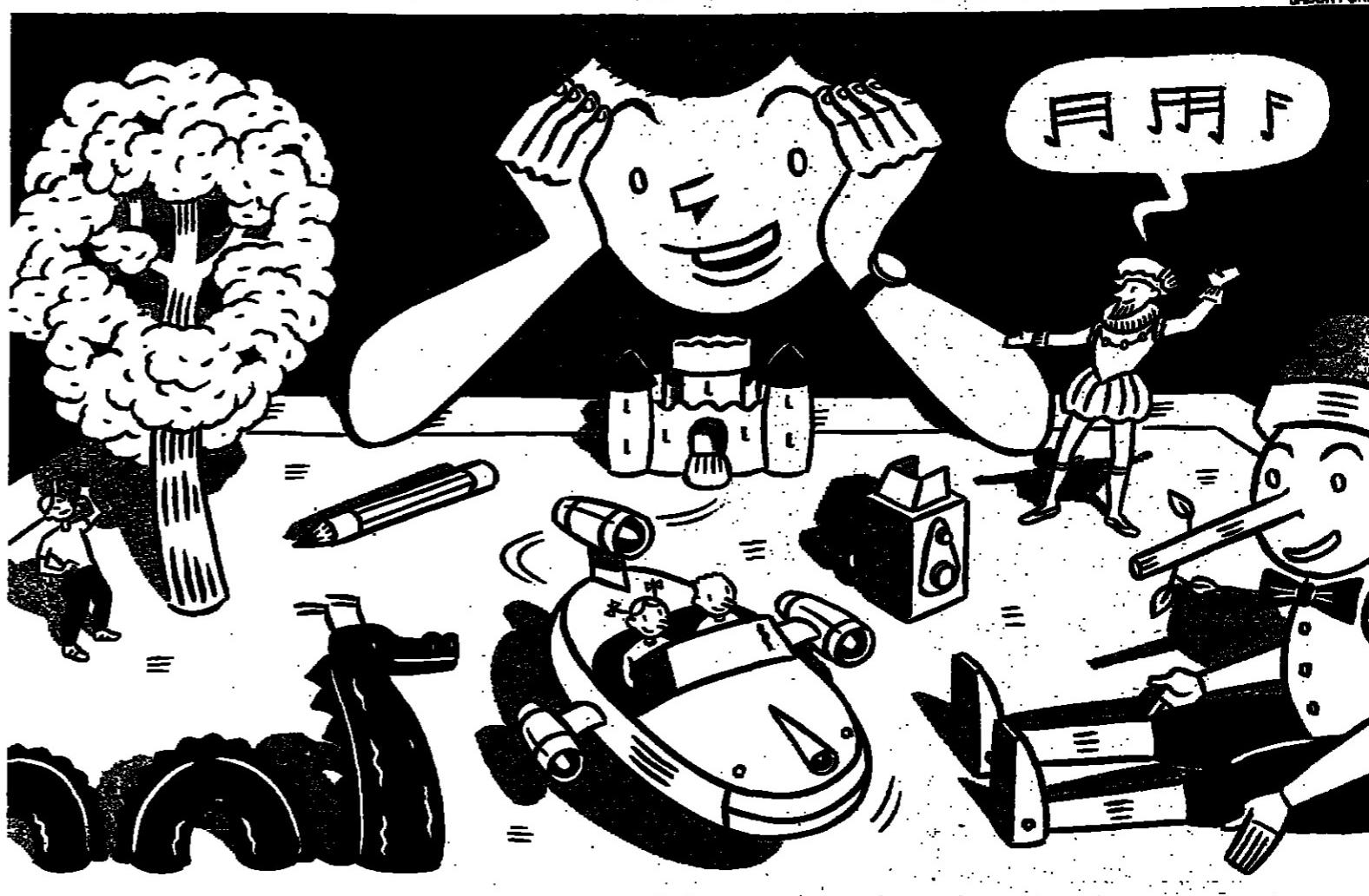
SCOTLAND

Some Thing To Do On A Wet Sunday Afternoon: Children's show featuring circus skills.

The Court Yard Theatre, Dough Road, Newnham Abbey, near Bellast (01223 848287). Feb 18-23, 10am-4pm. Adults and children £3. ☎

SCOTLAND

Curiosity: Hands-on science gallery specialising in light, colour and sound. Freeze your shadow on the shadow screen, walk into a camera and use your fingers to



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Evryman Theatre, Regents Street, Cheltenham (01242 572573). Feb 20, 1pm and 3.30pm. Adults £6.50, children £3.50. ☎

Tropical Delights: Varied programme about birds.

Wild Fowl and Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucestershire (01453 990333). Feb 17-25. Various events on different days so ring first. Adults £10.50, children £2.50, under-fives free, family ticket (two adults and two children) £11. ☎

Myths and Legends Drama Workshop: Explore the world of fantasy on stage for five to 12-year-olds.

The Theatre, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire (01608 642350). Feb 19-23 from 10am. ☎ (but ring first).

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OUTDOORS

15

JULIAN HERBERT



Fields of dreams become a thousand village greens

Oliver Gillie on millennium plans to establish green havens all over Britain

Elizabeth Soulsby came to Stanford in the Vale, an Oxfordshire village, by chance—and immediately fell in love. Sheep were grazing on a field in front of the church and the old manor house. It was the English rural idyll she had been searching for after spending years in Africa.

"I was struck by the beauty of the scene," says Mrs Soulsby, "and immediately felt that nothing must ever be allowed to spoil it."

She bought a house in the village, was elected to the parish council, and found that one of the first items on the agenda was how the parish could buy the field in front of the church. The asking price, then £35,000, was beyond the resources of the parish. Mrs Soulsby sought help and was referred to the Countryside Commission, which is hoping to set up a scheme with the Millennium Fund to establish 1,000 new greens in villages, towns and cities throughout the country.

Stanford in the Vale is a picture-book village with a 12th-century church and houses built of local stone—some of them thatched, others using local slate. It overlooks the Vale of White Horse, with the Downs and the ancient Ridgeway road to the south. The area is steeped in history. According to the *Wessex Chronicles*, King Alfred rode his horse in the "Western valley"—probably the valley of the

White Horse. But Stanford in the Vale is not a community of retired people wanting to preserve the old at the expense of the new. As well as traditional stone houses, there are several hundred other dwellings built by the council before and after the war, many of which are now owner-occupied. The village owns a leisure field which is used primarily by the local football club, but there is no cricket pitch.

"We are in the middle of the most beautiful countryside, but there is nowhere for children to play or for old people to sit and enjoy the sunshine on a summer day," Mrs Soulsby says.

But now it looks as if the field beside the church will soon belong to the village residents. It is one of 23 "millennium greens" established by the Countryside Commission as a pilot project. The Commission hopes to obtain support from the Millennium Fund to finance 1,000 before the year 2000. The Commission is providing half of the money and looks to other sources to provide the rest. A legal agreement will be made to protect the land for future generations. If the land were to be taken over for any other purpose, such as roads or housing, equivalent land would have to be provided elsewhere in the village.

The owner of the field, Hubert Howe, has brought down his price to £27,500, and the Countryside



Top: the field in the Oxfordshire village of Stanford in the Vale that will soon belong to residents
Above: an industrial site in Dormanstown, Cleveland, will also benefit from a millennium green

Commission has agreed to provide half the cost of buying and developing the field. It will be improved by the planting of trees and a hedge. Seating will be installed at one end, where parents can wait before collecting their children from the primary school next door, and at the other end, next to the ancient manor wall, there is a raised area which might be used as a stage for plays or prize-givings.

Millennium greens will be small havens for birds, trees and hedge-row creatures, but most of all they will be havens for human beings. They are conceived as spaces where people will enjoy informal leisure

pursuits, such as kicking a ball around with their children, playing cricket, throwing frisbees or flying kites.

Many of the millennium greens will be in densely populated city areas—some dominated by industry. Areas such as Dormanstown, near Redcar, Cleveland, which is situated midway between the former Dorman Long's steelworks (now British Steel) and ICI's Wilton works. Dormanstown was built in the 1920s as a garden city—a brave attempt to make the area attractive. But either the planners lost confidence, or ran out of money, because many of the trees that were

supposed to line the wide avenue roads were never planted.

Now Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is planning to create a millennium green on a space where old houses have been cleared. The site will be landscaped and planted with native trees, shrubs and wild flowers, which will defy the maze of pipework and chemical storage tanks a few hundred yards away. The green will provide a safe play area for children and a gateway to the proposed Cleveland Community Forest.

Walking south from the green at Dormanstown, a hiker crosses

farmland soon to be forest and can follow an old bridle track past Lazebury bank up to the Exton Hills, where there are views of the North Sea to the east. To the south there is open country leading to the North Yorkshire Moors—an area of wilderness stretching 25 miles to the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey in the south and Robin Hood's Bay in the east.

Whether or not millennium greens will become village greens in the legal sense will, it seems, be a matter for local people to decide. The law allows the greens to be used for agricultural shows for up to 12 days a year and, if the town or village has a right to have a market, they might also be used for stalls selling crafts.

The land for several of the millennium greens has been donated by local authorities. However, these authorities sometimes don't want areas which they may intend to develop for housing to be tied up as village greens. It took Jim Briggs and his friends in Aldwick, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex, eight years to get a piece of land owned by Arun District Council registered as a village green. The land at Aldwick was a meadow left open when surrounding land was developed for private housing in 1967. As required by the Town and Country Planning Act, the meadow was destined to become the property of the local authority.

Following administrative delays, however, it was not taken over by the council until 1987, by which time it had been used by residents for leisure purposes for 20 years.

Local people applied for the land to be recognised as a village green but were opposed by Arun Council, which wished to retain it as a realisable asset. After the first application failed, local people took advice from the Open Spaces Society and, in a second application four years later, evidence of 20 years' leisure use of the meadow was accepted and it was registered as a village green.

The advantage of registration is that it confers certain rights of use for recreation which do not alter with a change of ownership, and it reduces the chances of the land being used for building development. Some 33 new greens throughout England have been registered since 1990, when it became easier because a 20-year period had elapsed since the Commons Registration Act. Although most of the planned new greens will be only a few acres in size, it reverses the trend of the past 200-300 years, which has seen common land steadily enclosed by private owners.

• The Countryside Commission has an information pack for anyone interested in applying for funds for a millennium green. Write to: Millennium Greens, The Countryside Commission, 71 Kingway, London WC2B 6ST.

• Getting Greens Registered—a guide to law and procedure, £9 inc p&p, is available from the Open Spaces Society, 25a Bell Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 2BA.

SAILING: If you don't know an injector from an impeller, engine lessons may save your life

Rescue for the mechanically challenged

If, like me, you go to sea to sail, to use the power of the wind and the tide, you probably regard the engine on your boat with a mixture of awe and trepidation.

Without it you can't get in and out of marinas; picking up moorings, especially in a tide-way, can be challenging; and when the wind dies on you on a Sunday night and you are trying to get to work on Monday, you might just be facing one of those embarrassing calls to the office. And, crucially, engines can help to get us out of trouble.

Despite the degree to which we depend on engines, many sailors—experienced ones at that—know little about them.

You only have to ask the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), its statistics for lifeboat call-outs reveal that 34 per cent of all launchings to sail and powered pleasure-craft result from simple mechanical failure, and the proportion of those call-outs is increasing every year.

As long as we pay our dues to the AA or RAC, we can get away with almost total ignorance of what is going on under our car bonnet. But in the middle of the North Sea, it's just you, your spares and your engine.

As a former dinghy sailor with a distaste for mechanical matters, I needed an introduction to the diesel on my boat, *Nutcracker*. Having spent £5,000 on a new Yanmar three-cylinder during her refit last year, and a pile more having it put in, I had no desire to wreck it through ignorance.

The Essex Sailing School in

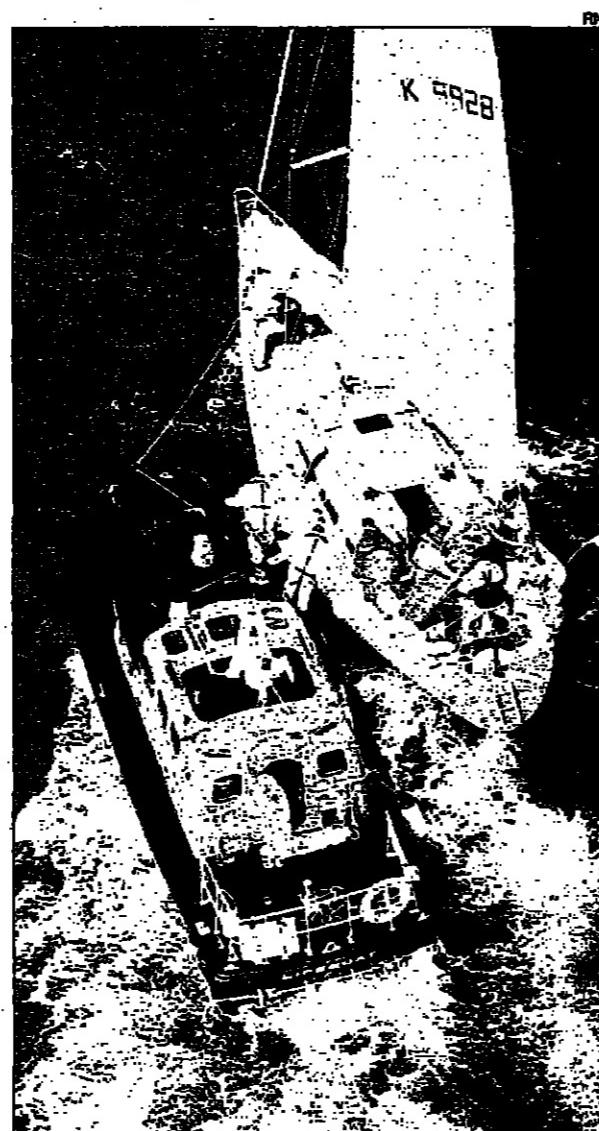
shores of the Blackwater estuary, is among many schools offering Royal Yachting Association-recognised one-day diesel courses for recreational sailors. The school runs around six courses a year, usually for about six students at a time, at £50 a head.

Mike Tyrrell, the school's principal and an engineer, believes the course is imperative for anyone embarking on the RYA's navigation and general seamanship programmes, such as the Day Skipper certificate. The aim is to give people an idea of their engine system, to avoid faults that they themselves have caused, to show which spare parts to carry and how to solve simple problems at sea—so avoiding the need to go to a workshop or to call out a lifeboat.

On my day at the school there were two other "students", Anne and Malcolm Gilding, who have owned boats for years but, like so many of us, had found a long list of reasons to put off getting to know their heat exchanger from their manifold.

It was an incident near their holiday home at Puerto Andraitx in Majorca, where they keep their Llaud—a 21ft, double-ended traditional Spanish fishing boat—that finally persuaded them to go back to school. A young couple in a speedboat suffered engine failure within sight of land but, unable to mend it themselves, were blown offshore and spent three days at sea, suffering severe dehydration, before they were picked up by a fishing boat.

"I've always put it off," said



Many lifeboat call-outs are for simple mechanical failure

Mr Gilding as he settled down to examine the school's demonstration engine block, complete with cut-away sections for ease of access and viewing. "But I'm glad we've got round to it. All our friends laughed when I said I was taking my wife on a diesel-engine course, but I could be ill or have an accident on the boat. I think the more Anne knows, the better."

Under Mr Tyrrell's tutelage, we spent a surprisingly inter-

esting day getting to grips with the "suck, squeeze, bang, blow" cycle of the diesel engine, the mysteries of direct or indirect injection, the vital role of oil in the engine, the fuel system and how to bleed the cooling system and the general dos and don'ts of marine engines.

Did you know, for example, (I didn't) that diesels are best put to work immediately they are turned on, and that warming them up in neutral for 20

minutes before you leave your mooring does them more harm than good? It's when you return after sailing that it should be left to tick over for a while before you turn it off.

By the end of the day we were talking about fine filters, injectors, the gallery, impellers and the governor. We even had tricky test questions such as: "If the thermostat is stuck in the closed position, what part of the engine would overheat first?" Answer: the cylinder head.

Mrs Gilding admitted that it was a lot more fun and easier to understand than she had expected. She also found it very useful. "I've always been a little wary about the engine. I used to think in the back of my mind that if it stopped, I wouldn't really know what to do. This has given me more confidence. Serious things can go wrong, but if it's just a hose going or something simple, then we should be able to cope."

The RYA hopes that more and more people will attend the courses, not only to cut down the number of lifeboat call-outs to boats with often minor mechanical failure but to improve general standards of seamanship.

Unfortunately, though, it seems only the more conscientious types are doing the course. As John Hart, for 15 years coxswain of the Barry Lifeboat, who helped to devise the course, put it: "The most irresponsible people who need instruction are the ones who don't do the course. There's no allowing for the lunatic few whatever courses you put together or legislation you bring to bear."

EDWARD GORMAN

• For information about RYA-recognised engine courses, contact Jane Keohane at the RYA on 01703 622454. Similar courses are also provided by leading engine manufacturers, including Volvo Penta (01223 228544); Perkins (01723 582408); and Sabre (01202 893720).

Next week: the superyacht

Beware the invasion of the berry snatchers

I MUST say some more about the waxwing, for the irruption of these birds into the British Isles this winter has proved to be quite spectacular—the biggest for 30 years. Flocks of 100 or more have been recorded in many parts of Britain, besides numerous smaller flocks and single birds. They have been driven down from Scandinavia and northern Russia by the shortage of rowan berries.

Most of them have been seen in town gardens or in hawthorn hedges on suburban waste ground. The reports of them on the Birdline telephone service (see below) have been quite comic—"behind Safeway", "in the garden of No 79", "near the Little Chef". This is no doubt because the hawthorn berries have already been largely stripped from the bushes by blackbirds and thrushes in the countryside, whereas in towns many cotoneasters and privet berries are still to be had.

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They are pinkish birds, though they can seem quite dull in poor light. The head and crest often have a red glow, and the black eyestripe and bib are conspicuous. The yellow and white marks on the wing are small, and the red blob-like sealing wax on the wing is hard to see. But at other times it looks fluffy.

They are pectoral birds, though they can seem quite dull in poor light. The head and crest often have a red glow, and the black eyestripe and bib are conspicuous. The yellow and white marks on the wing are small, and the red blob-like sealing wax on the wing is hard to see. But at other times it looks fluffy.



Waxwings catch snowflakes

yellow tip to the tail looks golden when the sun shines through it.

All the members of the flock sit quietly together in the bushes; then there is a flurry of berry-snatching, after which they all subside again.

saw a pair sitting side by side like doves, even touching bills once. Their thin trill is distinctive, but not ear-catching. They eat snow, and have even been seen flying out to pick up a falling snowflake in the air.

In flight, their grey rumps are conspicuous. They are said to fly like starlings, but their undulations reminded me more of great spotted woodpeckers. They are still around everywhere, but on the move.

DERWENT MAY

• What's about *Binders*—listen for the song of the chiffinch in woodlands and parks. *Twitters*—the pine bunting at Halewood, West Midlands; a long-billed dowitcher at Copperhouse Creek, Cornwall. Details from Birdline (0891 700222). Calls cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p at all other times.

When is a shop not a shop?



Always on Page 2
and in Weekend Money

ROMANTIC PARIS: When all's right with the world, the French capital has never been easier to reach ...

WHERE once air travel was sophisticated, it is now uncivilised. Delays and stress come with the plane ticket. Thus, when travelling to Paris, it seems sensible to leave the roaring, drinking, toy donkey-buying populace trapped in a holding pattern above Heathrow, and take the train instead.

The Eurostar train is psychologically far less damaging than dealing with airports and ferries. There are no queues, since passports are usually checked on the train. A weekend in Paris or Brussels

has suddenly become no different, in terms of travel, from one in Yorkshire or Cornwall. The British now slip under the Channel to see major exhibitions before they come to London, or enjoy lower-priced Paris opera tickets.

The Eurostar takes three hours to Paris, and the plane 45 minutes. But if you add an hour to Heathrow by tube, checking in, the hassle of retrieving luggage and escaping the satellites at Charles de Gaulle airport, as well as the trip in to central Paris, it is more like four.

The cheapest weekend Eurostar ticket is £59 return, £69 if you travel on a Friday, and there is no requirement to book a fortnight ahead. This compares with £69 on British Airways if you book ahead, plus an airport tax of £7, plus £20 for a taxi from Charles de Gaulle.

When you rise from the scrum beneath Waterloo station into the Eurostar terminal, it is a different world. The shark-nosed TGV trains are grey, with a yellow

livery stripe. Staff in yellow and blue suits greet you in your preferred language, and help to put your bags on the train. There is a French-style café, a bureau de change and trolleys which fit on the escalators.

In its initial stages, the service was shaky, but now 85 per cent of trains run on time. The Eurostar had its busiest weekend so far during the France-Scotland rugby international, with 17,500

passengers. Normally, many of the trains are half empty, giving one a feeling of value for money.

The food is the only let-down. In first class, at £220 return, you get a fine meal on real china featuring salmon and Belgian chocolates — but those in standard class are sadly disappointed. Fantasies of a warm *tarte aux poireaux* (leek quiche) or even *steak frites* and a nice glass of Burgundy are crushed. The efforts of Gardner Merchant, the mass-catering company, are no better than

British Rail's. The *croque monsieur*, ordered with great anticipation, is rather dull and soggy. The wine comes in those teeny bottles, and it seems rude to order three at once.

The journey through the Tunnel itself takes 20 minutes and then the train manager announces: "We are now in France. The train is about to reach its full speed of 300kph." The slight to-the-laggerdly British is clear.

KATE MUIR

MARTIN BLACK

Happy returns in the city of light

I seldom reveal domestic intimacies but all that follows has a direct relevance. A short time ago my partner, Mary, turned 40. Albeit fresh and frolicsome, there was no denying a personality in trauma. By way of antidote, I planned a wild, romantic extravaganza, a bigless memory to comfort her on the slide to senility.

I chose Paris as a city of happy associations, superb food (culinary delights take precedence after a certain age) and with a new high-speed rail link to invoke the age of civilised travel.

We made a good start. Almost. The gleaming symbol of Anglo-French technology pulled out of Waterloo on time — stopped, and pulled back in again. A power failure, apparently. We finally got under way half an hour later. It was then that the "purse" (very posh, these trains) came on the Tannoy to announce an industrial dispute in Paris which, for reasons that were never entirely clear, prevented first-class passengers from enjoying a full breakfast menu. Instead, we were served with a selection of what tasted like cardboard cutouts of the food we might have enjoyed if the

caterers had been working normally.

However, the journey itself was an unqualified success. A smooth and speedy excursion across the fields of southern England and northern France with a 25-minute bit in the middle which has passengers staring out into a subterranean blackness. The Channel Tunnel has nothing to show but you can't help looking at it in wonderment.

A taxi from the Gard du Nord took us to the Hôtel de Crillon on the Place de la Concorde. For the uninformed, this is no ordinary lodging house. Other hotels may match the Crillon for sheer luxury but few, if any, can aspire to its style. The only first-class hotel in Paris still under family control, it exudes imperial splendour with its palatial 18th-century facade and high-ceilinged rooms stuffed with gold-painted, widdly furniture. Modesty forbids me to specify the dimensions of our suite; suffice to say the grand piano in the corner did not look out of place.

The front view of the hotel, over the Place de la Concorde, has to be one of the finest cityscapes in Europe. The far



At night the Place de la Concorde breaks up into a riot of illumination with vehicles racing across the square. In the background the Eiffel Tower is picked out in incandescent glory.

side of the square is bordered by the Seine and beyond is the National Assembly. Far to the left is the Pantheon, Notre Dame and the Louvre. To the right, the gold dome of Les Invalides shines like a beacon, while a little further on the same trajectory is the Eiffel Tower. At night the scene breaks up into a riot of illumination with vehicles racing all ways across the square, the pleasure boats passing sedately along the Seine and the famous landmarks picked out in incandescent glory.

With supper booked for Les Ambassadeurs, the grandest of the Hôtel de Crillon's two restaurants, we settled for a light lunch (if such a thing is to be had in Paris) at the Boîtier on the rue de la Bastille. We took the pretty route, a half-hour walk through little streets lined with galleries

selling pictures at affordable prices. It was a reminder that Paris is still the natural home of his imagination. The gallery is a beautifully covered 17th-century town mansion, as impressive in its own way as the treasures it contains.

Parading as the oldest brasserie in Paris, the Boîtier can be a tourist trap. But the bubbling atmosphere overcomes the confusion of accents, and *fruits de mer* or *choucroute*, the two favourite dishes, taste all the better for serving under a splendid Art Deco glass dome.

The afternoon was handed over to culture. With time at a premium we avoided the big museums in favour of the easily manageable Musée National Picasso on the rue de Thorigny. While not the most outstanding of galleries devoted to a single artist (the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam

takes some beating) the pictures, many from Picasso's collection, reflect the full range of his imagination. The gallery is a beautifully covered 17th-century town mansion, as impressive in its own way as the treasures it contains.

And so back to the Hôtel de Crillon and the feast of Les Ambassadeurs.

While Mary fixed on the *foie gras* (served warm), a sensitive digestion led me to the lobster salad. We both followed with *lapin*, as soft and delectable as the accompanying mustard sauce. The wine was problem. I looked towards a vintage of Mary's year of birth but the 1952 Château Cheval Blanc St Emilion cost, more than £600. There had to be a limit and this was it. Another stab at the wine list produced a 1989 Margaux at a figure some way short of a remonstrance.

The ambience was formal but not inhibiting. Among the other bill-payers were several sleek, grey-haired men, who looked as if they had done well

out of business or politics,

dining with elegant women half their age. The price of wine did not figure in their conversations.

The memory of a superb meal remained strong well into the next day when we tried to rebuild the appetite with a brisk walk along the Champs-Elysées. It is always a joy but particularly on a Sunday morning when the traffic is light and there is more opportunity to stand and stare. A truly diverting sight was the gloriously politically incorrect poster for the movie, *Pret-a-Porter*: six naked women marching purposefully towards the camera. Not seen in London, who would dare

say that London is poorer as a result? Me, for one.

Culinary progress continued with lunch at the Restaurant Paul, on the Place Dauphine, a small family concern, cosy in its simplicity. We ate well but not so well as to regret having to bypass the Eurostar meal on the return journey. This was because the Eurostar meal was mediocre, though the champagne aperitif was welcome. We were left with the feeling that second class without free meals was better value.

Back at Waterloo, we walked out into the drizzle. There was a long queue at the taxi rank and no taxis. Happy birthday, Mary, and welcome home.

BARRY TURNER



Venus de Milo, one of the Louvre's many treasures

Paris: fact file

The author was assisted by Relais & Châteaux (0171-287 0987, fax 0171-437 024).
 Hôtel de Crillon, 10 place de la Concorde, 75008 Paris. There are 120 rooms and 43 suites. Rates per night for double/twin room: Fr3,200-£420 (Fr540). Rates per night for suite: Fr4,500 (£653) to £2,500 (£343). Breakfast is from Fr155 (£20) to Fr230 (£30). For reservations contact the Hotel Crillon (01 331-44 71 15 0); fax: 01 331-44 71 03, or Relais & Châteaux on the number above.

Terrasse Hotel: 12-14 Rue Joseph de Maistre, 18e (46 06 72 85). Overlooking Montmartre cemetery, the roof-terrace restaurant has a terrific view over Paris. Fr930-Fr1,230.

Saint-Gregoire: 33 Rue de l'Abbé Grégoire, 16e (45 48 23 23). Near Montparnasse, it has a yellow and pink decor, nice old furniture, with breakfasts in a vaulted cellar. Fr760-Fr950.

Grands Hommes: 17 Place du Panthéon, 5e (46 34 19 60). The birthplace of Surrealism, comfortable and friendly. Opposite the Panthéon. Fr635-Fr760.

Hôtel de la Bretagne: 27 Rue Sainte-Croix-de-la-Bretagne, 4e (48 87 77 63; fax 42 77 26 78). Enthusiastically run in a 17th-century building between the Pompidou Centre and the Marais. Most rooms big, some with beams. Fr20-Fr730.

CHEAP BUT CHEERFUL

Esmeralda: 4 Rue St-Julien-le-Pauvre, 5e (43 54 19 29). The owner of this quaint little 16th-century place is a painter, sculptor and writer. Some rooms have views of Notre Dame. Fr530-Fr950.

Prima Lepic: 29 Rue Lepic, 18e (46 06 44 64). Welcoming family-run hotel in the market street of Montmartre. Breakfast in a *trompe-l'œil* orangery. Fr350-Fr400.

Nésie: 7 Rue de Nesle, 6e (43 54 62 41). Exotic decor and urban farmyard. Cash only — up front. Fr260-Fr320.

BASIC BARGAINS

Hôtel des Arts: Cité Bergère, 9e. Well-run and friendly, in a quiet alley with other good cheap hotels. Fr325-Fr380.

Pratic Hotel: 20, Rue de l'Ingénieur Keller, 15e. Clean, friendly hotel near the Eiffel Tower. Fr225-Fr320.

Idéal: 3 Rue des Trois-Frères, 18e (46 06 63 63). Clean bargain close to the Sacré-Cœur funicular. Fr125-Fr250.

building in a quiet alley near the Seine. Fr990-Fr1,470.

Terrasse Hotel: 12-14 Rue Joseph de Maistre, 18e (46 06 72 85). Overlooking Montmartre cemetery. The roof-terrace restaurant has a terrific view over Paris. Fr930-Fr1,230.

Saint-Gregoire: 33 Rue de l'Abbé Grégoire, 16e (45 48 23 23). Near Montparnasse, it has a yellow and pink decor, nice old furniture, with breakfasts in a vaulted cellar. Fr760-Fr950.

Grands Hommes: 17 Place du Panthéon, 5e (46 34 19 60). The birthplace of Surrealism, comfortable and friendly. Opposite the Panthéon. Fr635-Fr760.

Hôtel de la Bretagne: 27 Rue Sainte-Croix-de-la-Bretagne, 4e (48 87 77 63; fax 42 77 26 78). Enthusiastically run in a 17th-century building between the Pompidou Centre and the Marais. Most rooms big, some with beams. Fr20-Fr730.

CHEAP BUT CHEERFUL

Esmeralda: 4 Rue St-Julien-le-Pauvre, 5e (43 54 19 29). The owner of this quaint little 16th-century place is a painter, sculptor and writer. Some rooms have views of Notre Dame. Fr530-Fr950.

Prima Lepic: 29 Rue Lepic, 18e (46 06 44 64). Welcoming family-run hotel in the market street of Montmartre. Breakfast in a *trompe-l'œil* orangery. Fr350-Fr400.

Nésie: 7 Rue de Nesle, 6e (43 54 62 41). Exotic decor and urban farmyard. Cash only — up front. Fr260-Fr320.

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ROBIN YOUNG

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THERE are more than 1,400 hotels to choose from in Paris. Many are delightful, others morbid. Here is a list of tried-and-tested favourites, and not too expensive. The emphasis is on charm and comfort, and the hotels include some of the most romantic nooks the city has to offer, though the cheapest are necessarily rather basic. Now is a good time to go, because many hotels are offering discounts.

• Prices, given in francs, are per room per night based on two people sharing. As Weekend goes to press, the exchange rate is Fr757 = £1.

• PRIZE COLLECTION

If a single reservations number can suit almost any Paris hotel needs, it is Compagnie Générale Immobilière et de Services' toll-free central reservations number, 0800 895 950, for their 28 hotels (from two to four stars). Their excellence and charm are exceptions to the customary rule that company-run hotels lack personality and flair.

At the top of the range is the superb manor Parc Victor Hugo, Avenue Raymond-Poincaré, 16e: five stately buildings around a courtyard near the Trocadéro, renovated in a "British" style under the direction of Nina Campbell. It is the workplace of Joëlle Robuchon, France's most sought-after chef. From Fr2,900.

TRAVEL

... a second honeymoon in a north Devon hotel; and the smart way to score romantic Brownie points

Rewritten version of bride's bed revisited

We first saw the Highbullion Hotel in 1976 through a haze of champagne and confetti. Our memories are of a warm, red room, acres of wood paneling, a big, brass bed and feeling slightly miffed at being asked not to smoke in the restaurant. Wrapped up in the brand-new sensation of being married, we delighted in good food and wine, scarcely noticed the sporting facilities on offer, and felt pleasantly marooned by the floods that beset north Devon that year.

It was raining again when we revisited the hotel in Chittlehampton last summer, this time with children in tow. It is always a little nervewracking returning to a place you remember with affection. Perhaps our recollections were distorted by honeymoon happiness. Perhaps this was not the right place to bring children: after all the hotel does stipulate "No children under eight".

We need not have worried on either count. If anything, Highbullion has improved. A Victorian Gothic mansion full of turrets and towers, it stands in a parkland estate dotted with cottages, farms and lodges, most of which have been converted into additional guest bedrooms. Just over a year ago Highbullion acquired 85 acres of ancient woodland inhabited by wild red and roe deer, foxes and badgers. Another recent addition is an 18-mile stretch of fishing rights along the banks of the River Mole. A second restaurant added in the 1980s juts out over a wooded valley and the views, especially at sunset, are magnificent. Plus former-smokers, we now wholeheartedly endorse the restaurant's no-smoking policy.

As soon as we saw the abundance of other families with adolescent and teenage children, we relaxed. Highbullion is an informal, family-run hotel. Hugh and Pam Neil first came across the house in 1963 — "a ridiculous place full of bats and broken windows, no water and a decrepit generator" — and moved in with their two small children, both

of whom are now closely involved with the running of the hotel.

Mrs Neil, a devotee of auctions since the 1940s, has furnished many rooms at Highbullion with her "finds". The vast, ornate Victorian mahogany bed in our room cost £12 in the 1950s and the pale green, tasseled velvet curtains were a mere £3. Mrs Neil uses antique textiles she has collected to make curtains and lampshades for the bedrooms. She dries her own flowers, and every nook and cranny of the hotel is filled with dried arrangements and, in season, vases of fresh sweet peas and roses from the floods that beset north Devon that year.

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Highbullion Hotel: a Victorian Gothic mansion set in a parkland estate dotted with cottages, farms and lodges



A honeymoon bedroom: furnished with antiques

to achieve his ambition to thrash his father on the tennis court. Croquet on the lawn, such a gentle game when played by other families, proved a great hit with our son and daughter had ferreted out the indoor putting green and table tennis room. Later, Helen swam like a dolphin in the deserted, kidney-shaped indoor pool while I had my toe nails painted bright red in the leisure complex and Paul finally managed

to achieve his ambition to thrash his father on the tennis court. Croquet on the lawn, such a gentle game when played by other families, proved a great hit with our son and daughter had ferreted out the indoor putting green and table tennis room. Later, Helen swam like a dolphin in the deserted, kidney-shaped indoor pool while I had my toe nails painted bright red in the leisure complex and Paul finally managed

professional is available for lessons, the attitude towards golf at Highbullion is pleasantly laid-back. The Neils were happy for Helen to try to hit a ball around a few holes, an idea that would cause apoplexy at most Home Counties golf clubs. One elderly pair of ladies only plays golf during their annual visit to the hotel because they feel it's the one course where they will not be sneered at or patronised.

The emphasis at Highbullion is on comfort rather than frills. It is full of unexpected pleasures such as the well-stocked library, the bubbling spa bath and a room devoted to billiards. Although the bathrooms had few of the small luxuries normally associated with four or five-star hotels, the overall effect of a large, rambling, pleasant and comfortable country house.

If we were not able to

or sauces and to produce fruit salads and low-fat milk, but I did wonder if I was the only person among so many sporting types who was worried about healthy eating.

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If we were not able to

recapture fully the delightful self-indulgence and contentment we had enjoyed as newlyweds, this was due to family demands, not the hotel. We are currently hatching plans to farm the children out for a weekend so we can return to Highbullion on our own. Perhaps in time for our 20th anniversary.

SARA DRIVER

• Highbullion Hotel, Chittlehampton, Umberleigh, North Devon EX37 9HD (01769 540561).

• The Driver family were guests of Crystal Premier Britain (0181-300 8513) which offers breaks at the hotel from £9.50 per person per night for dinner, bed and breakfast.

VALENTINE GETAWAYS

If HUGGY-BUN really loves Pooh-Bear and wants to demonstrate the fact on Valentine's Day, that loving message in the classified ads ought to be backed up with a weekend somewhere romantic. Romantic locations are plentiful and a phone call to one of the following places could provide a bonus — hugs and kisses — in the weeks to come.

Prices are the lowest available for a weekend (two nights/bed and breakfast) per person, unless otherwise stated.

The Cotswolds have many romantic corners, and candlelit dinners are just one feature of a romantic weekend at the Lygon Arms in Broadway (01386 85255, £25 with dinner and a bottle of champagne). Other attractions include a country club with pool and solarium.

The north Norfolk coast is full of romantic locations, from splendid towns such as King's Lynn, to pretty villages such as Wells-next-the-Sea and historic Walsingham. It can be breezy, so wrap up well and book in at the warm and hospitable Congham Hall (01485 600250, £170 with dinner), an elegant Georgian house in Hillington now converted into a first-class hotel.

MOVING north, the Gulf Stream warms Portpatrick in Wigtonshire, on the west coast of Scotland, where the small but perfect Knockinians Lodge (01776 810471, £125 with dinner) has sub-tropical gardens, a Michelin-roasted restaurant, and a programme of champagne tastings.

All right for some, but what about people with children? No problem if you book in for a romantic weekend at Calicot Manor (01666 890391, £130 with dinner), a charming manor-house hotel near Tewbury in Gloucester. This hotel will look after the children while you and the Flopsy Bunny relax in one of two fine restaurants.

Other hotels offering child care include Woolley Grange (01225 864705, £97), close to ever-romantic Bath, and Ockenden Manor (01442 461111, £138 with dinner), in the ancient village of Cuckfield in West Sussex, from where adventurous lovers can take their partners ballooning, just to give the weekend a lift.

Romantic weekends require romantic locations, so cities such as York should do well, especially for those who stay at Middlethorpe Hall (01904 642141, £188 with dinner) a splendid hotel set in a William and Mary mansion.

London has plenty of corners and can be explored at leisure from small, centrally located hotels such as the Atheneum (0800 964470, £180) — anyone who proposes while dining in the restaurant on Valentine's Day and then marries that person can have a free honeymoon stay — or Dukes Hotel in St James's (0171-491 4840, £180), close to the splendours of Royal London ... and the Knightsbridge shopping area.

Finally, try one of the following: Llangoed Hall (01874 754525, £170 with dinner; Feb 14, £60 double room, B&B) near Hay on Wye; the Maes y Neuadd Hotel (01766 780200, £130 with dinner) near Harlech in Snowdonia; the Well House (01579 342001, £144) at St Keyne, near Lizard in Cornwall; Johnstoneburn House (01875 833696, £130) at Humble in East Lothian; and the Manor Hotel (01308 897616, £100 with dinner) at West Bexington on the Dorset coast. All these places offer a warm welcome, good food, attentive staff and a romantic atmosphere. After that it is up to you: most lovers would prefer it that way.

ROBIN NEILANDS

Rendezvous, page 9



GED

Baalbeck to Palmyra

A 7-night visit to Syria and Lebanon from £595.00

Our newly-inaugurated flight from London Gatwick to Damascus enables us to offer a comprehensive visit to two of the most important and interesting sites in the Middle East, which have been little-visited in the recent past. The Syrian section of the itinerary takes in the famous sites of Damascus, Palmyra and Lebtan, while in Lebanon we visit both the ancient sites of Baalbek and Palmyra together with a useful two-night stay at Anfe in Lebanon's countryside. This is without doubt a wonderful opportunity to visit some of the world's most interesting sites.

We reach Damascus in the evening and spend the first night in the oldest living city in the world and the Islamic capital under the Omayyads. Exploration of the city has to be on foot, navigating the tortuous alleys of the old city is wonderful.

Palmyra is a very special place - the city has colonnaded streets and monumental arches but is perhaps most well known for the Temple of Baal.

The Lebanese are proudly aware that they stand at the crossroads. Behind them lies two decades of violence that claimed thousands of lives and brought the country to economic, political and social collapse, to the edge of anarchy. The civil war and military invasion robbed Lebanon of its pristine reputation as the Middle East's market place and the quintessential travel destination.

So now, at long last, it is again possible to visit this most important of countries which has such a profound effect on the world's civilisations. Its ideal situation at the crossroads of the three continents, Africa, Europe and Asia, and its temperate climate have attracted eminent figures from history - Ramesses II, Sargon, Darius, Alexander, the Caesars, Hebe Khan, Saladin, Tamburlaine and Napoleon. Most have left their imprint, especially at the historical sites of Byblos and Baalbeck.

Day 1 Depart by Monarch Airways special flight from London Gatwick to Damascus. Transfer to the Al-Paradis Hotel and stay for two nights.

Day 2 Visit the Omayyad Mosque, Saladin's Tomb and Old City, the Church of Aranais and the Street Called Straight. Walk through the tortuous alleys of the Old City. See the chapel commemorating the lowering down of St. Paul from a window.

Day 3 Depart for Palmyra. In Palmyra we will visit the Temple of Baal, the colonnaded streets, theatre, monumental arch and tombs. Continue to Horns for the night.

Day 4 Drive to Crac des Chevaliers, the residence of the crusader knightly Hospitalier. Cross the border into Lebanon via Tripoli to Anfe and the

grotto through which runs the Holy River. Return to the hotel via Ehden where we will have lunch at Nabeel Marzouk.

Day 5 Travel south to Byblos, where the site is 4,000 years old. It still stands as a remarkable example of Roman architecture dating 2000 BC and is surrounded by the keep of the Frankish castle. In the afternoon a half-day city tour of Beirut will be made taking in the main points. We then proceed to our base for the next two nights, the 5-star Chitoura Palace near Zahlé.

Day 6 Travel to Baalbeck, 'City of the Sun'. The acropolis is the largest and best preserved corpus of Roman architecture left. Return in the late afternoon to the hotel for dinner and overnight in Zahlé.

Day 7 In the morning depart Zahlé for the Lebanese/Syrian border for Damascus airport to catch the return flight to London Gatwick airport.

Departure Dates & Prices

Wednesday - per person (in twin)

1996
February 21, 28 £595
March 6, 13 £595
March 20, 27 £595
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April 10, 17, 24 £595
May 1, 8 £595
May 15, 22 £595

Mondays - per person in twin

September 2, 9, 16 £595
September 23, 30 £595
October 7, 14, 21, 28 £595
November 4, 11, 18, 25 £595
December 2, 9, 16 £595
December 23, 30 £595

Supplements

Single room £175

Price includes air travel, transfers and road transfers, meals, entry fees to sites, local guides, services as indicated in itinerary, services of local representative/guide. Not included: travel insurance, airport taxes, visas, tipping, entrance fees. All prices are per person.

Important Notes: (i) Sequential order of the tour may sometimes be changed in order to reflect contingencies at certain sites.

Travellers should be assured that the Company will constantly monitor the security aspects of travelling in Lebanon.

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Marina del Sol Hotel which will be our base for the next two nights. Located some 35 miles north of Beirut in the fashionable coastal resort of Anfe. The hotel's features include rooms with ensuite facilities, bar/restaurant and swimming pool.
Day 5 Follow the coast road to Tripoli and visit the citadel, the monumental gateway, the inner courtyard of the Castle of St. Giles built by the Franks, and also see the Mosque of Abu Waled constructed in a delicate Moorish style. Also visit the Khalil Khayatureddine, the residence of the crusader knightly Hospitalier. Cross the border into Lebanon via Tripoli to Anfe and the Kadisha Valley. Arrive at Becharre and from there travel to the Cedars. At Mt. Makmal visit the Kadisha

GREECE: Matthew Bond takes his choice between solitude and socialising in the northern Sporades...

Blessed by the god of holidays

On day one I tangled with a jellyfish. On day two I trod on a sea urchin. On day three... it was time to strike a deal with whichever Greek god it is that protects Alonnisos, the least known and least developed of the northern Sporades. "Enough, enough," I cried: "You start looking after me properly and I promise to write only nice things about your island." At that precise moment, however, I was in no position to negotiate. I was treading the crystal clear waters of the Aegean, some 15m off the beautiful beach of Megalo Mourtzi, staring desperately into the blue, deep depths which had just claimed my wedding ring.

One moment of energetic, show-ing-off front crawl it was there, the next — gone. Miserably I turned towards the beach — not waving, nor indeed drowning, but certainly heading towards divorce.

But fair's fair, the old god made good. Less than five minutes later a passing Norwegian snorkeller surfaced, spluttering the Norwegian for "is this it?"

And from that moment on, Alonnisos and I got on... well, swimmingly is not the right word, but certainly very well. For it, too, has known serial misfortune. In 1950 its vines were devastated by disease; in 1965 its main village was destroyed by an earthquake and in recent years large tracts of its exquisite pine forests have been laid waste by fire. But houses can be rebuilt, mainland wines bought in and enough trees saved to make Alonnisos a relaxing stop-off point on a tour of the sometimes-sporadic Sporades.



For the first week we stayed in a hillside villa on the outskirts of Old Alonnisos, with spectacular 180-degree views towards the uninhabited island of Evvia in the other. And yes, old Alonnisos is the town that was destroyed by the earthquake.

One man's disaster is another man's opportunity and while the original inhabitants were quickly rehoused in the island's main port, Patitiri, the shells of their once-beautiful houses in old Alonnisos were snapped up by bargain-seeking foreigners. And beautiful many of them are once again, although now they are owned by English, Germans, Italians and even the odd American. The beautifying process, by the way, continues apace and during the day the air can echo to the sound of electric saws and power drills. It's not a

problem, you just go the beach.

The end result of all this pleasant recent toll can come as a surprise to those whose idea of an island holiday home is simply white-washed walls and a stone floor. Ours, for instance, kept with tradition outside but inside the boundary wall boasted four glorious sun terraces and a well-equipped kitchen that made eating in a real possibility. When you're facing the third chicken souvlaki in as many days, that can be a comfort.

Not to be outdone by the incoming, the local authority has also embarked on a programme of improvements and is setting quite a

pace. In the week we were resident about half the island's dirt roads were tarred for the first time. Such progress is probably anathema to those who have been driven to Alonnisos — first from Skiatos and then from neighbouring Skopelos — by the search for peace and quiet. But it makes life a lot easier for the casual visitor.

The tracks that descend from the main road running along the island's mountainous spine are very steep in places and not ideally suited to mopeds. Although you can reach most of the beaches by caïque from Patitiri, further exploration

really does require a car. Ours came with the villa and allowed us to explore several of the beaches along the island's eastern coastline. Although they don't quite measure up to Skopelos and Skiatos (you don't really find sand on Alonnisos) the water is very clean and there are far fewer people about. But again the pace of change means you should be prepared for surprises. Driving north to Ayios Dimitrios, in search of what the latest edition of the *Rough Guide* described as "real solitude", we found a strip of perfectly arranged beach umbrellas and a bar playing contemporary dance music. We

loved it — much more fun than solitude. In search of more of the same we spent our second week on Skopelos, less than an hour away by Flying Dolphin hydrofoil. The change was instantly apparent — more restaurants, more beaches and a lot more people. It took getting used to. As did some of the prices — the early evening views from the fishing village of Agnadas are wonderful but it is the moment you work out that the fish you have just ordered has cost £30 that lingers in the memory.

However, there are ways of escaping the crowds. First, you can rent one of the growing number of superior villas, which give you the



Skopelos has more restaurants, beaches and people — but is more expensive — than other towns on the northern Sporades coastline

Getting there

The author was a guest of the Greek Islands Club (01932 220477). On Alonnisos he stayed at Eviros House, which sleeps up to four but for two people costs from £905 per person a week in low season to £1,224 in high season, including flights, transfers, maid service and car hire. On Skopelos he stayed at Jennie's House, which can sleep up to six but for two people costs from £943 per person per week in low season to £1,348 in high season.

Greek Islands Club's spring "Private Collection" brochure has villas and hotels priced from £1,000 per person per week.

opportunity to create your own private enclave. ours — an exquisite building with a high-ceilinged main room resembling an artist's studio — was in the middle of its own olive grove, an oasis of tranquillity just five minutes moped ride from Skopelos Town. A tranquil oasis that is, as long as you didn't mind the sound of dogs, cockerels and an unhappy mule.

An alternative route to peace and quiet is to hire a boat at Panormos and motor slowly northwards along the coastline. Just past the vast pebble beach of Milia, you reach Hovoda, where a succession of inlets not accessible by land just about guarantees you a private beach. The only problem is that when you find paradise you want to stay there. So remember to take a picnic. We didn't, so headed north to Loutraki and lunch.

The island's well-maintained road network offers another means of escape, particularly if you don't mind bumping the last couple of miles to the wilder, rockier northeast coast. But there is escape and escape and, when the street theatre of the harbour-side promenade got too much, we headed up the steep, narrow streets towards the Castro, a ruined Venetian fortress. History was not our aim. Happiness, we discovered, was a cafe called Vravlos, a barman who knew his cocktails and a waiter who liked modern jazz. And probably the best view on the island.

TRAVEL TIPS AROUND EUROPE

For those embarking on an inter-rail adventure, the revised *1996 Europe by Train* book by Katie Wood and George McDonald (HarperCollins, £9.99) is essential. Written for travellers on a tight budget, the guide gives comprehensive information on all aspects of rail travel, accommodation in chosen places, sightseeing and nightlife, details of Channel Tunnel options and up-to-date facts about Eastern Europe.

Martin Randall Travel (0181-742 3355) is offering river cruises along the Danube during the Austro-Hungarian Music Festival, August 10-17. Taking in ten concerts, the cruise starts at Passau in Germany and visits Vienna, Budapest and Bratislava, returning via Melk and Linz in Austria. The cost is from £1,750 per person, based on two sharing, including return flights from Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh or Heathrow to Munich, seven-nights' full-board accommodation on the *MS Rouse*, all excursions, concerts, lectures and guides.

Live! in Europe (01709 839839) is offering rock concert packages. For example, a four-day break to Paris to see Tina Turner at the Bercy Omnisports Arena on May 3 costs £149 per person, including two nights at a 3 or 4-star hotel, with breakfast. Departs May 2, travelling via Le Shuttle.

Headwater Holidays (01606 486999) has an end-of-season family ski break at the Venabu Hotel in Gudbrandsdalen, Norway. Departing March 30, the price of £786 per adult, and £458 per child (aged four-11), includes return flights from Heathrow to Oslo, seven nights' full-board accommodation, skis, boots and ski pass.

Treat your loved one to a Valentine's break at the first-class Chateau de Ferme in the Picardy region of France. Unicorn Holidays (01582 834400) offers the break at £140 per person for overnight accommodation, a gourmet meal with a bottle of champagne, breakfast, and return Dover-Calais ferry crossing. Departs February 14.

Elysian Holidays (01797 225482) has a self-contained 19th-century house on the Greek island of Syros. 20 minutes flying time from Athens. For example, staying at Talanta, which sleeps eight, during the Greek Easter holidays (April 14-15) costs £1,000 per week for the house (flights not included), including housekeeper and linen. Beaches and watersports nearby. Available from April 6.

A three-night break in Athens staying at the 3-star Philippou Hotel with Argo Holidays (0171-331 7070) costs £245 per person, including B&B and return flights from Heathrow. Departs February 16.

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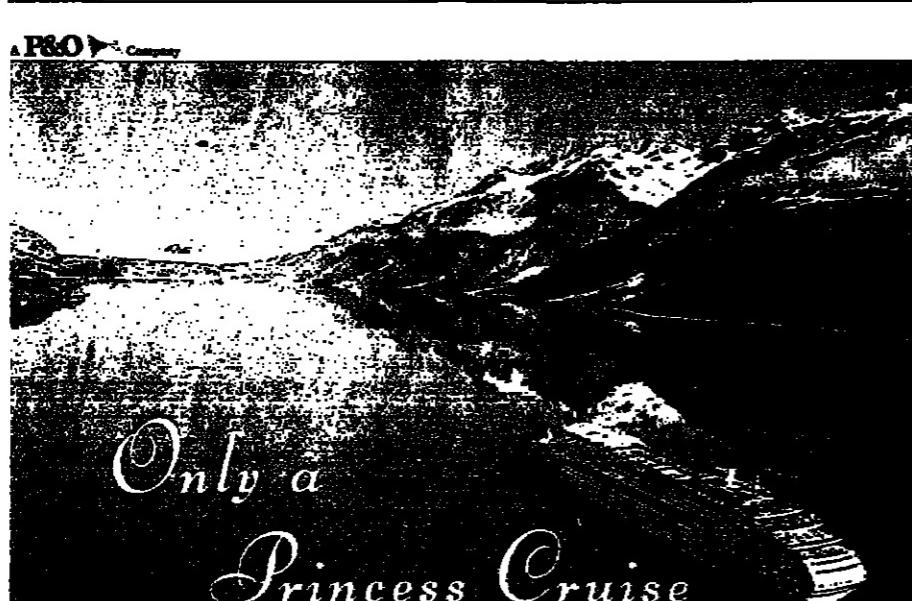
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TRAVEL

... and once there, **Ginny Dougary** sees her spouse in a pleasing new light; plus where to find fine food

How my husband became a Euro-hero

It did not start well. I had been anticipating the short, sharp thrill of romance, not the bug-eyed haul of a flight to New York. It had been more than a year since my husband and I last had a break from the rollercoaster demands of family life. A cupidous recharge was long overdue. For months we had been looking forward to our midweek break in Paris, now only three hours away from London by Eurostar. In theory.

Half an hour out of Waterloo our zippy, new, high-speed train stopped in its tracks. As the minutes, and then the hours crept by, it became increasingly clear that the minor technical hitch was a major electrical blow-out: we seemed destined to spend our romantic break in south Croydon. Our dinner could not be served because there was no power to heat it. The dimly pink pseudo-Deco lamps were the first to go, followed by the neon strip above them, then the emergency lights dimmed and faded, one by one, until we were plunged into darkness.

As the next train for Paris whizzed by, ours limped back to London past those names which resonate with romance: Bromley South, Beckenham Junction, Peckham East and Brixton. At ten o'clock, we'd drawn into Waterloo. It had taken us four hours to get back to where we had started.

When we finally arrived in Paris, it was three in the morning. As we filed down to the taxi rank, it was painfully evident that the Gallic cabbies had not been warned about our late arrival. There was not a taxi in sight. My husband took charge, leading the troops into the deserted streets around the Gare du Nord. Had he not done so, we might have stood there, dazed and befuddled, until dawn. My hubby, the Euro-hero. This at least was good for romance.

The Hôtel de Vigny, whose staff greeted us sympathetically at 4am, proved equally restorative, and after six hours' sleep, the world seemed a much better place.

You can keep Paris in the springtime. As far as I am concerned, autumn is the business. We hit the Bois de Boulogne, where lovers walk as the russet leaves tumble out of the sky. Across the Champs-Elysées and a promenade down the grand Avenue Foch, where the poorest countries boast the most opulent honey-coloured embassies, and everywhere there is something to please the eye. The scalloped roads, the trees sprouting out of their filigree doilles, the wrought-iron fences.

The park itself was in full autumnal bloom. The smoky-green depths of the lake emerging from the amber foliage; the purple-leaved trees with their bright orange berries like Christmas lights. A handsome man rowing past gave a wicked smile. All of which is rather good for the senses, if not the soul.

Best of all was lunch. It is a tremendous feeling to stumble on somewhere uniquely Parisian without the aid of a guide book. This was an unpromising kiosk with an extraordinary clientele of dog owners. At one table there were leather-jacketed bikers. Their neighbours were a pair of genteel and exquisitely dressed elderly ladies. There was a family group of moth-



Keep Paris in the springtime: autumn is the business

The plump ranks of pillows in the boudoir make one feel mistressy and illicit

ers, babies and grannies, all wearing hairbands. And a sprawling circle of low-lifers: a hairy-blazed drunk who performed an operatic duet with Mustafa, the kiosk-owner ("Oh, merde, j'ai soi! ... Attends, j'arrive"), a huge man with an aubergine face, cowboy hat and anorak; a very old man, his grizzled head swaddled in a Breton sweater; and a Josephine Baker lookalike who nibbled her chicken leg with an air of detached refinement.

It was a delicious but noisy experience, tucking

into sautéed potatoes flecked with herbs, a salad and omelette, red wine served in Fanta beakers, under the clear blue skies: the members of the dog club yelling at their pekes, poodles and labradors.

On to the Empire-style mansion of the Musée Marmottan on rue Louis-Bouilly, a short walk from Mustafa's kiosk. There is something particularly beguiling about a small museum. The Musée Rodin, the Dulwich Picture Gallery, the Marmottan are all gracious buildings in lovely grounds, with just enough great art to leave you feeling nourished but not overfed. At the Marmottan there is a room full of wondrous medieval illuminations, all blues and pinks and golds worked in meticulous detail. And, downstairs, a collection of some of the best-known Impressionist works, including *Water Lilies*, and the painting which gave a name to the movement, *Impression: Sunrise*.

Beautiful paintings should be enough to transport the true romantic into a state of dreamy intoxication. But my husband and I are a pair of shameless voluptuaries. We need the real thing. We return to our bedroom for a glass of champagne and a duo of religieuses: two sumptuous balls of coffee-iced pastry. Well, they do say Paris brings out the romantic in you.

Graveyards may not be most people's idea of a romantic outing, but they are mine. A moss-covered morgue brings out the mooshy adolescent in me, which was the last time my heart was broken. And as all romantics know, it is always more lyrical to be love's victim than her victor. Pére Lachaise Cemetery.

Emerging several hours later, we were refreshed, invigorated and ready for more food.

Paris: fact file

□ The author was a guest of Relais & Châteaux and Eurostar.

□ Hotel de Vigny, 9-11 rue Babac, 75008 Paris. There are 26 rooms and 11 suites. Rates per night for a double/twin room are Fr 2,200 (£230) to Fr 2,600 (£245). Rates per night for a suite are Fr 2,600 (£245) to Fr 4,500 (£600). Breakfast is Fr 90 (£12) per person. Reservations: contact the Hotel Vigny. (0331) 40750388, fax 00331-40750581) or Relais & Châteaux.

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where we spent the next morning tramping was a disappointment. Too many American tourists and bony guards and not enough overgrown ruins. We searched, in vain, for the monuments to Héloïse and Abélard (the *amants célèbres*). The directions to the graves of Simone Signoret and Oscar Wilde had been obliterated by the tracing of millions of fingers over the years. There was a gratifyingly macabre monolith with a frieze of laughing skulls and a touching display of fresh flowers in front of Rossini's resting place. We did find ourselves in front of the tomb of James Douglas Morrison (1943-1971), which now requires the presence of two full-time guards "parce que les gens ne respectent pas". One of the tributes was a scrap of paper with the words "Hello, I Love You — A poem." I toyed with the idea of leaving my poem, *Light My Fire*, but thought better of it.

We had our last meal in a wonderfully old-fashioned restaurant, in what is becoming the mega-trendy new quartier of Paris. The Basile is now being stormed by 1960s design shops and off-the-wall galleries.

Frankly, I am beginning to worry about my husband. He chose to eat calves brains for lunch. And on our slow meander back to the station he was captivated by the displays of offal in the charcuteries. "Will you look at that?" he said in front of one spectacular array of pigs' heads. "What a beautiful sight."

Well, they do say Paris brings out the romantic in you.



Sur le pont Alexandre III: even Parisian bridges bring out the romantic in you

RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS

THE frustration of eating out in Paris is trying to eat more than three meals a day. Breakfast, though, is the best time to visit Les Deux Magots or Café Flore, the landmark cafés of St-Germain. Before tourists have had their fill, you will find regulars there for the pleasure of "la corbeille du boulanger", excellent coffee and pressed orange.

Conveniently close to the Étoile and the Arc de Triomphe is the latest, stylish adjunct to the Guy Savoy stable, Cap Vernet, at 82 avenue Marceau, (47 20 20 40).

The cooking is quick and precise and the bill about Fr200-250 a head.

After a romantic stroll from Notre Dame over the islands in the Seine, try Au Gourmet de l'Ile, at 42 rue St-Louis-en-l'Ile, (43 26 79 27). This is quintessentially Parisian, the food is straightforward and traditional, and the bill could be less than Fr150 each.

A quieter alternative in the same street is Le Monde des Chimères, at number 69 (43 54 45 27), typical of old Paris. The cooking is familiar but fastidious and one's bill about Fr300.

In the delightful Marais square, Place de Vosges, La Guirlande de Juif at number 25 (49 87 94 07) has its terrace under the eaves. It has common ownership with the Tour d'Argent (15-17, quai de la Tournelle, 43 54 23 31), which charges astronomically for its unrivalled view of Notre-Dame and dishes that have been classics for decades. At La Guirlande the cooking is lighter, more modern and more affordable, about Fr225.

For a big brasserie try Bofinger, 3-7 rue de la Bastille, (42 72 87 82), full of copper and mirrors and waiters negotiating a tricky staircase with incredibly heavy-laden trays held boldly aloft. About Fr200 a head.

In Montmartre the best address is A. Beauvilliers at 52 rue Lamarck, a period piece serving distinguished cooking. The cost, though, is likely to be at least Fr500.

Le Café Marly (49 26 06 60) at 93 rue de Rivoli, overlooks the Louvre's Cour Napoléon. It is usually crowded, and service can be slow. About Fr250.

Even more distinguished is Les Monuments in the Trocadéro (44 05 90 00). The food is fine, about Fr350 a head, and the view is terrific.

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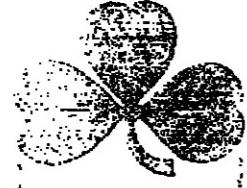


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TRAVEL

21

... Neil Maclean explores the chewing-gum island of Chios; and Mike Gerrard samples Greek food



Women sit and talk outside their homes in Pyrgi, one of the mastic villages of Chios

A taste of unknown Athens



Icon shop in Monastiraki, near the Plaka and flea market

You'll hate Athens. Lots of people say so, and they all give the same reasons: smog, traffic, crowds and few attractions beyond the obvious ones. Worst of all, it is said, you can't get a decent meal there, particularly in the tourist rip-off area known as the Plaka. Here, among the many restaurants, there is only one safe place to eat, they assure you. The trouble is, they all recommend somewhere different.

First food. In the past couple of years I've spent several weeks in Athens, and eaten well for little more than the price of a visit to a burger bar in Britain. Take Socrates' Prison, for example, where I would gladly be imprisoned for a week in order to eat my way through the menu and sip the draught Guinness. Only a marble's throw from the Acropolis, the inside has a cosy, bar-like atmosphere, with pre-Raphaelite prints on the walls. Outside, there is an attractive walled garden. For £4 I had a delicious beef roll stuffed with parsley, green pepper and aubergine, and, afterwards (for £1.50) a overbaked apple bursting with raisins, sultanas and walnuts, and drowning in cream.

The Salamandra has only Greek menus, so take your phrase book or take a chance

Athens fact file

- British Airways (0181-759 5511), Olympic Airways (0171-409 3400) and Virgin Atlantic Airways (01293 562349) fly daily to Athens, from around £300 return, all and at present doing special offers ranging from about £110 to £140.
- Among the many tour operators offering packages to Athens are Abroad Holidays (0181-767 3030), Eurobreak Holidays (0181-780 7700), Citybreaks (0141-951 8410) and Simple Simon (0171-373 9333).
- For further details contact the Greek National Tourist Office, 4 Conduit Street, London W1 007 0171-534 5997.

on specials, which include *saganaki* (fried cheese) and *stefofai* (a spicy sausage and pepper stew from the Pelion peninsula). And, if you think Greek salad means only one thing, how about one of its creamy Roquefort salads?

In the Plaka, there are any number of good eating places, as well as a few of the fast-turnover, poor-quality kind. Follow a few simple rules when eating in Greece, and you will not go far wrong. Never eat anywhere which employs someone to coax you inside. Ask to see the kitchen — not to

look at the food but to check out the chef. If he looks as if he has just escaped from prison, with the blood of his crimes still on his apron, and his lips, you're safe. The food will probably be excellent.

For Plaka atmosphere, eat in one of the three basement tavernas along Kifissathineon.

To eat outdoors, go to Xynos or O Platano. Vegetarians should head for the Eden and its spinach or mushroom pies, meat-free moussaka and the best brown bread this side of the Bosphorus.

Athens

fact file

- Finally, go beyond the Plaka's souvenir shops into the flea market west of Monastiraki Square, particularly on Sunday mornings, when the market extends for miles, and the noise is enough to wake the dead in the Kerameikos Cemetery alongside. Want to buy a religious icon, a stuffed stork, a car engine, second-hand camera, bootleg music tapes? Then come to Athens on a Sunday morning.
- In fact, go to Athens at any time, I love the place. So might you.
- Mike Gerrard is the author of *Essential Athens* (published by the AA, £4.99).

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The Pelion peninsula.

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Homer's secret hideaway

The first pupil to be scolded for chewing gum in class — and I am almost completely sure of my facts here — was one of Homer's lads, sitting on the rocky outcrop above the village of Vrontados on the island of Chios.

The old blind poet, perched on what is now known as Homer's Seat, on hearing sounds of mastication, uttered the immortal lines: "What are you chewing boy? Spit it out," which has since become a refrain of teachers throughout the ages, only recently superseded, in the late 20th century, by: "What are you smoking boy? Get off the ceiling."

It is tempting to assume an island which is famous for little more than Homer and chewing gum must be a dull place but Chios hides a bright light under a modest bushel. Few tourists even know of the island's existence, although it is the fifth largest island in the Greek collection. Even some of my most enthusiastic Greek-island-hopping friends failed to locate it on their usually detailed mental maps.

You find it between Lesbos and Samos, so close to Turkey that the castle of Cesme can be clearly seen across the water on a sunny day. It is an affluent place, thanks to maritime money: 15 per cent of the world's commercial shipping is said to be owned by Chiot families and, until recently, they have felt little motivation to enter the tourist market. Besides, Chios has few really good beaches to attract the tourist crowds: a holiday here is more cerebral than that.

For me, the highlight of the island was a visit to the monastery of Nea Moni. Founded in 1045 and inspired

by a trio of monks who spotted a miraculous icon on the site, it is an atmospheric place, purged with incense, and has the best views of the island.

A bearded priest ushered me through an entrance way covered in ancient, smudged frescoes to another chamber, this time alive with an astonishing array of mosaics, celebrated for the vibrancy of their colours. Sombre-looking saints glared at me from the ceiling. "During the midnight masses," said the priest, "these faces shimmering in the candle light seem to come alive."

In the katholikon next door a clock struck eight — six hours adrift — stuck on an ancient Byzantine time. The priest paused to show me a cupboard full of human skulls, a reminder of the infamous Turkish massacre of 1822.

The mastic-producing villages in the south of Chios, collectively known as the Masticora, were treated less harshly by the Turks at that time, thanks to their valuable crop. It seems the women in the sultan's harem were particularly fond of their chewing

gum, although mastic has 101 other uses.

For some reason, Chios is one of the very few places in the world where trees produce mastic. Some people say it is because of a combination of the island's volcanic terrain, soil and climate; villagers believe it is thanks to the tears of Saint Issidor, murdered in AD 250 by the Romans for embracing Christianity.

The most interesting of the Masticora is the village of Mesa, a classic example of fortified architecture with all the houses facing inwards, inter-connected by arches from roof to roof, assisting the villagers to flee attacking pirates — and these days, I was told, for safety for young lovers hiding from parents.

Chios fact file

□ The author was a guest of the Greek Islands Club, 66 High Street, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 1BU (01932 220477) and stayed at the Villa Argentikon, featured by the club. Prices range from £893 for a week in May to £1,180 a week in August. The prices are per person for four people sharing a villa, and include return flights from Heathrow to Athens, domestic flights to Chios and breakfast.

calls into little known cities, towns and villages which will offer an insight into life in this vast region of Russia.

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DAY 2 Moscow Morning city excursion. Sail in the afternoon.

DAY 3 Uglich Founded in 1148 this Golden Ring city offers a treasure trove of historic sites. Visit the Kremlin, the cathedral and church of St John and the cathedral of the Transfiguration.

DAY 4 Kostroma Home to the noble families Godunov and Romanov before the young Alexi Romanov was elected Tsar. See wonderful 16th and 17th century architecture including the Ipatyevsky Monastery.

DAY 5 Nizhni Novgorod Formerly known as Gorki, the city was closed to foreigners until 1990. Founded in 1221 it became famous as an important trading post attracting caravans from Siberia and the Orient. Visit the magnificent Kremlin.

DAY 6 Cruising the Volga

DAY 7 Samara We will spend the afternoon in this important river trading city. Stroll along the river promenades and time permitting visit Stalin's secret bunker, built in 1942 as a precaution in case he had to flee from Moscow.

DAY 8 Cruising the Volga

DAY 9 Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) Explore this strategically placed city at the confluence of the Volga and Don rivers. Visit Mamai Hill, site of the most ferocious fighting during the Winter of 1942 which resulted in over 200,000 deaths. See the 170ft statue of Mother Russia and the memorial — a most moving experience.

DAY 10 Cruising the Volga

DAY 11 Astrakhan Located 70 feet below sea level on a huge island in the Volga Delta. This is a fascinating city which is divided by the Kutum River and linked by more than 30 bridges. The city's old bridge with dozens of arches, is over two miles long. Ivan the Terrible conquered the city in 1556 and annexed it to Russia.

DAY 12 Cruising the Volga

DAY 13 Divushkin Island A morning to walk and relax in peaceful setting.

DAY 14 Saratov One of the oldest cities on the Volga, Saratov is surrounded by mountains and is best known as the home of the writer and politician, Cheryshevsky and the world's first cosmonaut — Yuri Gagarin.

we hope to arrange an outdoor concert of Mari folk music. This is the capital of the Mari Autonomous Republic. The Mari are ethnically related to the Finns. In the afternoon we will call into the delightful village of Yurino, a well preserved merchant village of the 19th century which is surrounded by forest.

DAY 15 Kazan Half Russian, half Tartar this trading port is a unique blend of Christian and Moslem cultures. Conquered by the ever industrious Ivan the Terrible in 1552 this capital of the Tartar republic was founded in the 13th century by the Mongols. Tolstoy and Lenin studied here and the State Museum offers a marvellous insight into the history of the Tartars.

DAY 16 Symbrik

Formerly known as Ulyanovsk, this was the birthplace and boyhood home of Lenin. A Soviet shrine for over 70 years, it is surprising to see how prominent a place Lenin still occupies in the national psyche.

DAY 17 Kotor

Half Russian, half Tartar this

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in the 13th century by the Mongols.

Tolstoy and

Lenin studied here and the State Museum

offers a marvellous insight into the history

of the Tartars.

DAY 18 Kozenodemansk-Yurino

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we will

make

calls into little known cities, towns and

villages which will offer an insight into life in this vast region of Russia.

DAY 19 Yaroslavl

Formerly known as

Ulyanovsk, this was the birthplace and

boyhood home of Lenin. A Soviet shrine for

over 70 years, it is surprising to see how

prominent a place Lenin still occupies in

the national psyche.

DAY 20 Cruising the Volga

DAY 21 Moscow

Visit the Kremlin and the

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the Circus.

DAY 22 Moscow-London

Afternoon flight to London (Heathrow).

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CHESS

by Raymond Keene

CERN chess contains a bloody element which was not in earlier decades of this century. The reason is the prevalence of the Sicilian Defence as an alternative to 1 e4. Practitioners of the latter rely on long-term endgame advantages such as control of the open c-file and the more mobile pawn centre, but they must be gauntlet first of a savage middlegame. More often not, the black king is gunned in the centre even before it flees, while, as the following shows, the black king is not necessarily safe, even once it has fled the kingside.

White: E. Schiller
Black: T. Wolski
San Mateo 1995
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 d4 c5 5 Nxe5 Nxe5 6 Bc4 Nf6 7 Nc4 Bb7 8 Nf3 Bg7 9 Be2 Nf6 10 Nxe5 Nxe5 11 Bxd8 Nxd1 12 Bb6, where Black was doubtless concerned that his errant knight would escape unscathed. The text sets scene for slashing attacks on opposite wings.

13 Nc2 Nc5 14 Nf5 Qe7 15 Bb7 Nf6 16 Nxd1 Nc6 17 h4 Bxf6 18 Nf2 Nf6 19 Nc2 Nc6 20 Nf2 Nf6 21 Nc2 Nc6 22 Nf2 Nf6 23 Nc2 Nc6 24 Nf2 Nf6 25 Nc2 Nc6 26 Nf2 Nf6 27 Nc2 Nc6 28 Nf2 Nf6 29 Nc2 Nc6 30 Nf2 Nf6 31 Nc2 Nc6 32 Nf2 Nf6 33 Nc2 Nc6 34 Nf2 Nf6 35 Nc2 Nc6 36 Nf2 Nf6 37 Nc2 Nc6 38 Nf2 Nf6 39 Nc2 Nc6 40 Nf2 Nf6 41 Nc2 Nc6 42 Nf2 Nf6 43 Nc2 Nc6 44 Nf2 Nf6 45 Nc2 Nc6 46 Nf2 Nf6 47 Nc2 Nc6 48 Nf2 Nf6 49 Nc2 Nc6 50 Nf2 Nf6 51 Nc2 Nc6 52 Nf2 Nf6 53 Nc2 Nc6 54 Nf2 Nf6 55 Nc2 Nc6 56 Nf2 Nf6 57 Nc2 Nc6 58 Nf2 Nf6 59 Nc2 Nc6 60 Nf2 Nf6 61 Nc2 Nc6 62 Nf2 Nf6 63 Nc2 Nc6 64 Nf2 Nf6 65 Nc2 Nc6 66 Nf2 Nf6 67 Nc2 Nc6 68 Nf2 Nf6 69 Nc2 Nc6 70 Nf2 Nf6 71 Nc2 Nc6 72 Nf2 Nf6 73 Nc2 Nc6 74 Nf2 Nf6 75 Nc2 Nc6 76 Nf2 Nf6 77 Nc2 Nc6 78 Nf2 Nf6 79 Nc2 Nc6 80 Nf2 Nf6 81 Nc2 Nc6 82 Nf2 Nf6 83 Nc2 Nc6 84 Nf2 Nf6 85 Nc2 Nc6 86 Nf2 Nf6 87 Nc2 Nc6 88 Nf2 Nf6 89 Nc2 Nc6 90 Nf2 Nf6 91 Nc2 Nc6 92 Nf2 Nf6 93 Nc2 Nc6 94 Nf2 Nf6 95 Nc2 Nc6 96 Nf2 Nf6 97 Nc2 Nc6 98 Nf2 Nf6 99 Nc2 Nc6 100 Nf2 Nf6 101 Nc2 Nc6 102 Nf2 Nf6 103 Nc2 Nc6 104 Nf2 Nf6 105 Nc2 Nc6 106 Nf2 Nf6 107 Nc2 Nc6 108 Nf2 Nf6 109 Nc2 Nc6 110 Nf2 Nf6 111 Nc2 Nc6 112 Nf2 Nf6 113 Nc2 Nc6 114 Nf2 Nf6 115 Nc2 Nc6 116 Nf2 Nf6 117 Nc2 Nc6 118 Nf2 Nf6 119 Nc2 Nc6 120 Nf2 Nf6 121 Nc2 Nc6 122 Nf2 Nf6 123 Nc2 Nc6 124 Nf2 Nf6 125 Nc2 Nc6 126 Nf2 Nf6 127 Nc2 Nc6 128 Nf2 Nf6 129 Nc2 Nc6 130 Nf2 Nf6 131 Nc2 Nc6 132 Nf2 Nf6 133 Nc2 Nc6 134 Nf2 Nf6 135 Nc2 Nc6 136 Nf2 Nf6 137 Nc2 Nc6 138 Nf2 Nf6 139 Nc2 Nc6 140 Nf2 Nf6 141 Nc2 Nc6 142 Nf2 Nf6 143 Nc2 Nc6 144 Nf2 Nf6 145 Nc2 Nc6 146 Nf2 Nf6 147 Nc2 Nc6 148 Nf2 Nf6 149 Nc2 Nc6 150 Nf2 Nf6 151 Nc2 Nc6 152 Nf2 Nf6 153 Nc2 Nc6 154 Nf2 Nf6 155 Nc2 Nc6 156 Nf2 Nf6 157 Nc2 Nc6 158 Nf2 Nf6 159 Nc2 Nc6 160 Nf2 Nf6 161 Nc2 Nc6 162 Nf2 Nf6 163 Nc2 Nc6 164 Nf2 Nf6 165 Nc2 Nc6 166 Nf2 Nf6 167 Nc2 Nc6 168 Nf2 Nf6 169 Nc2 Nc6 170 Nf2 Nf6 171 Nc2 Nc6 172 Nf2 Nf6 173 Nc2 Nc6 174 Nf2 Nf6 175 Nc2 Nc6 176 Nf2 Nf6 177 Nc2 Nc6 178 Nf2 Nf6 179 Nc2 Nc6 180 Nf2 Nf6 181 Nc2 Nc6 182 Nf2 Nf6 183 Nc2 Nc6 184 Nf2 Nf6 185 Nc2 Nc6 186 Nf2 Nf6 187 Nc2 Nc6 188 Nf2 Nf6 189 Nc2 Nc6 190 Nf2 Nf6 191 Nc2 Nc6 192 Nf2 Nf6 193 Nc2 Nc6 194 Nf2 Nf6 195 Nc2 Nc6 196 Nf2 Nf6 197 Nc2 Nc6 198 Nf2 Nf6 199 Nc2 Nc6 200 Nf2 Nf6 201 Nc2 Nc6 202 Nf2 Nf6 203 Nc2 Nc6 204 Nf2 Nf6 205 Nc2 Nc6 206 Nf2 Nf6 207 Nc2 Nc6 208 Nf2 Nf6 209 Nc2 Nc6 210 Nf2 Nf6 211 Nc2 Nc6 212 Nf2 Nf6 213 Nc2 Nc6 214 Nf2 Nf6 215 Nc2 Nc6 216 Nf2 Nf6 217 Nc2 Nc6 218 Nf2 Nf6 219 Nc2 Nc6 220 Nf2 Nf6 221 Nc2 Nc6 222 Nf2 Nf6 223 Nc2 Nc6 224 Nf2 Nf6 225 Nc2 Nc6 226 Nf2 Nf6 227 Nc2 Nc6 228 Nf2 Nf6 229 Nc2 Nc6 230 Nf2 Nf6 231 Nc2 Nc6 232 Nf2 Nf6 233 Nc2 Nc6 234 Nf2 Nf6 235 Nc2 Nc6 236 Nf2 Nf6 237 Nc2 Nc6 238 Nf2 Nf6 239 Nc2 Nc6 240 Nf2 Nf6 241 Nc2 Nc6 242 Nf2 Nf6 243 Nc2 Nc6 244 Nf2 Nf6 245 Nc2 Nc6 246 Nf2 Nf6 247 Nc2 Nc6 248 Nf2 Nf6 249 Nc2 Nc6 250 Nf2 Nf6 251 Nc2 Nc6 252 Nf2 Nf6 253 Nc2 Nc6 254 Nf2 Nf6 255 Nc2 Nc6 256 Nf2 Nf6 257 Nc2 Nc6 258 Nf2 Nf6 259 Nc2 Nc6 260 Nf2 Nf6 261 Nc2 Nc6 262 Nf2 Nf6 263 Nc2 Nc6 264 Nf2 Nf6 265 Nc2 Nc6 266 Nf2 Nf6 267 Nc2 Nc6 268 Nf2 Nf6 269 Nc2 Nc6 270 Nf2 Nf6 271 Nc2 Nc6 272 Nf2 Nf6 273 Nc2 Nc6 274 Nf2 Nf6 275 Nc2 Nc6 276 Nf2 Nf6 277 Nc2 Nc6 278 Nf2 Nf6 279 Nc2 Nc6 280 Nf2 Nf6 281 Nc2 Nc6 282 Nf2 Nf6 283 Nc2 Nc6 284 Nf2 Nf6 285 Nc2 Nc6 286 Nf2 Nf6 287 Nc2 Nc6 288 Nf2 Nf6 289 Nc2 Nc6 290 Nf2 Nf6 291 Nc2 Nc6 292 Nf2 Nf6 293 Nc2 Nc6 294 Nf2 Nf6 295 Nc2 Nc6 296 Nf2 Nf6 297 Nc2 Nc6 298 Nf2 Nf6 299 Nc2 Nc6 300 Nf2 Nf6 301 Nc2 Nc6 302 Nf2 Nf6 303 Nc2 Nc6 304 Nf2 Nf6 305 Nc2 Nc6 306 Nf2 Nf6 307 Nc2 Nc6 308 Nf2 Nf6 309 Nc2 Nc6 310 Nf2 Nf6 311 Nc2 Nc6 312 Nf2 Nf6 313 Nc2 Nc6 314 Nf2 Nf6 315 Nc2 Nc6 316 Nf2 Nf6 317 Nc2 Nc6 318 Nf2 Nf6 319 Nc2 Nc6 320 Nf2 Nf6 321 Nc2 Nc6 322 Nf2 Nf6 323 Nc2 Nc6 324 Nf2 Nf6 325 Nc2 Nc6 326 Nf2 Nf6 327 Nc2 Nc6 328 Nf2 Nf6 329 Nc2 Nc6 330 Nf2 Nf6 331 Nc2 Nc6 332 Nf2 Nf6 333 Nc2 Nc6 334 Nf2 Nf6 335 Nc2 Nc6 336 Nf2 Nf6 337 Nc2 Nc6 338 Nf2 Nf6 339 Nc2 Nc6 340 Nf2 Nf6 341 Nc2 Nc6 342 Nf2 Nf6 343 Nc2 Nc6 344 Nf2 Nf6 345 Nc2 Nc6 346 Nf2 Nf6 347 Nc2 Nc6 348 Nf2 Nf6 349 Nc2 Nc6 350 Nf2 Nf6 351 Nc2 Nc6 352 Nf2 Nf6 353 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Howard set to reject Hindley transfer

By RICHARD FORD AND KATE ALDERSON

MICHAEL HOWARD is expected to reject a Parole Board recommendation that Myra Hindley be moved to an open prison and given the hope of eventual freedom. The Home Secretary will give his verdict on the proposal that Hindley be transferred to easier jail conditions within the next few weeks.

Hindley, 54, yesterday refused to comment on the proposed move, disclosed in *The Times*, during a telephone conversation from Durham Prison with a member of her legal team. She is understood to want a move to the more relaxed regime offered by the three open jails for women in England and Wales and hopes for her freedom.

But she accepts the practical and political difficulties involved in a move to prison without perimeter fences.

Mr Howard, visiting Birmingham, said no decision had yet been made on the recommendation, which was made after a review of her case last month.

The Home Secretary is unlikely to risk the public outcry that moving Hindley to an open jail would cause. He is also likely to take into account the fears for her safety if she were sent to a prison where it would be easy for members of the public to gain access. One

prison source said: "Ironically, Hindley probably needs protection from the public rather than the other way round."

Mr Howard is under no obligation to accept the Parole Board recommendation and can take into account wider considerations than whether Hindley represents a risk to the public. One is "maintaining public confidence in the criminal justice system".

The Parole Board suggestion provoked fury from the parents of children who were killed by Hindley and her lover, Ian Brady. They were jailed for life in 1966 for the murders of Lesley Ann Downey and Edward Evans. In 1987 Hindley confessed to her role in the killings of Pauline Reade and Keith Bennett.

It was this confession which caused Lord Waddington, when Home Secretary in 1990, to order her to remain in prison for the rest of her life.

Yesterday Ann West, the mother of Lesley Anne, said she was disgusted by the recommendation. "I was satisfied with her imprisonment in Durham but this new recommendation is devastating," she said.

"Hindley has tortured me for the last 31 years and she should stay behind bars under lock and key. She is an evil and calculating woman and I'm sure she will try and escape from an open prison."

Winnie Johnson, the mother of Keith Bennett, who went missing aged 12 in June 1964 and whose body was never found, said she believed Hindley would attempt to escape from an open prison: "She will do her best to escape and when she does I will follow her and torture her like she tortured the children she killed."

"Anyone who can believe she would not kill again if she got the chance must be an idiot."

Manchester misses its rain

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE crisis facing the nation's water supplies was underscored yesterday with news that Manchester, known as one of the rainiest cities in England, is now one of Europe's driest, ahead of Madrid and Athens.

Weathermen said the past ten months in the area had been the driest for 70 years. "In absolute terms, Majorca has been the driest," the Manchester weather centre said. "But as a proportion, Manchester has been the driest in Western Europe, with 50

per cent of its normal rainfall. Most parts of Europe have had 80 to 90 per cent of their normal rainfall."

The centre added that the winter had been unseasonably dry because cold easterlies had pushed the usual rain-bearing Atlantic weather fronts north and south of the British Isles. This was one of the reasons why Spain had had such bad weather.

The findings, which underline how the past year has seen Britain's weather patterns turn upside-down, making the North drier than the South, came as North West Water announced a £75 million programme to preserve supplies.

The anti-drought schemes include 34 projects to guarantee supplies to towns in east Lancashire and east and south of Manchester, where local reservoirs have emptied, and 26 projects to provide an extra 105 million litres of water a day by increased abstraction from boreholes and upgrading treatment works.

Parts of Scotland, Wales and the North of England face the threat of flooding this weekend as rising temperatures begin a rapid thaw of ice and snow. The far north of Scotland will be battered by gales and driving sleet.

Forecast, page 24

Major says status of EMU test is unclear

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND JILL SHERMAN

JOHN MAJOR has admitted that the status of one of the key tests for a 1998 go-ahead for a single currency is unclear.

The Prime Minister's comment came in a letter to Peter Shore, the former Labour Cabinet minister, who has been pressing the Government to concede that the effective collapse of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism has wrecked the legal basis for economic and monetary union.

Last night Mr Shore said

being told another child was trapped. Daniel died later. The men are to be nominated for bravery awards.

At Blaina cemetery, the Welsh dragon flags that had covered the men's coffins were given to their widows, Margaret Griffin and Sian Lane. The two firemen were then laid to rest side by side.

The funeral procession passed within 200 yards of the charred council house where the part-time firemen died last week. They had rescued Daniel Hartog, 5, and went back into a house after wrongly

being told another child was trapped. Daniel died later. The men are to be nominated for bravery awards.

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Scott hits back

Sir Richard Scott today defends his arms-to-Iraq inquiry, denying that it was either unfair or aggressive. "I don't think there is any argument to support the unfairness charge," he says in an interview with *The Times*. He acknowledges that ministers were put under pressure in giving evidence in public but says that it was justified.

Valerie Grove, page 6

INJECTION
A photograph yesterday of Mrs Ann Fidler was incorrectly captioned in some editions. We apologise for the error.



David Lane, clutching his father's helmet, with his mother at Blaina cemetery

Village pays tribute to firemen

BY A STAFF REPORTER

FIREFIGHTERS and villagers lined the streets of Blaina, Gwent, yesterday to pay tribute to two firemen who died in a blazing house last week.

The coffins of Kevin Lane, 32, and Stephen Griffin, 42, were carried on two fire tenders decked with wreaths. Mr Lane's son David, 8, travelled in the front seat.

At the service Mr Griffin's daughter Tina, 17, sang the pop song *Eternal Flame*.

Later Andrew Griffin, 20, and David Lane were given their fathers' yellow helmets.

At Blaina cemetery, the Welsh dragon flags that had covered the men's coffins were given to their widows, Margaret Griffin and Sian Lane. The two firemen were then laid to rest side by side.

The supermarket blaze in which the firefighter Fleur Lombard died on Sunday was started deliberately, police said yesterday. Detectives were questioning a 20-year-old security guard at the Leo's store at Staple Hill, Bristol.

About 500 members of Avon Fire Brigade are expected at the funeral of Miss Lombard, 21, in Derby Cathedral on Tuesday.

Minister backed on probation training

The High Court has backed the Home Secretary's move to scrap the need for trainee probation officers to have a social work qualification. The probation officers' trade union had claimed that Michael Howard had abused his powers by ending the requirement. But two judges ruled that he had acted within his discretion when he decided that a social work diploma or similar qualification was no longer appropriate, and instead recruits should train "on the job". Mr Howard will now push ahead with attempts to recruit more mature entrants, including retired members of the Forces, into the Probation Service.

Leave to appeal was refused, and the union was ordered to pay Mr Howard's costs.

Spending limit

A plan to cap public spending and eliminate the threat of emergency tax increases was put forward last night by a former Cabinet minister. John Patten, Education Secretary from 1992-94, said that by law the State should not be able to spend more than 40 per cent of national income. John Major has said he would like to get spending down to 35 per cent of gross domestic product.

Witness appeal

Police are appealing for witnesses after a 16-year-old boy was stabbed to death in a McDonald's restaurant. Daniel Westmacott, of Edmonton, north London, was attacked by a group of youths on Thursday after an altercation at the restaurant in Edmonton between him and three teenagers. Daniel was stabbed in the back with a seven-inch carving knife.

Fatal blunder

Rupert Joslin, 88, is considering legal action against Wycombe General Hospital, Buckinghamshire, after it admitted responsibility for the death of his wife, Violet, 85. Mr Joslin, of Marlow, gave his wife twice the recommended dose of the drug warfarin on a hospital technician's instruction. A verdict of accidental death was recorded at an inquest yesterday.

Scott hits back

Sir Richard Scott today defends his arms-to-Iraq inquiry, denying that it was either unfair or aggressive. "I don't think there is any argument to support the unfairness charge," he says in an interview with *The Times*. He acknowledges that ministers were put under pressure in giving evidence in public but says that it was justified.

Valerie Grove, page 6

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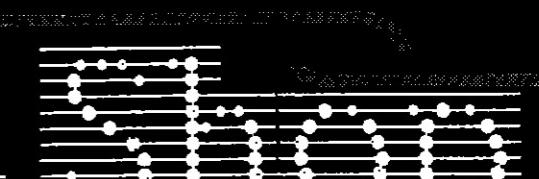
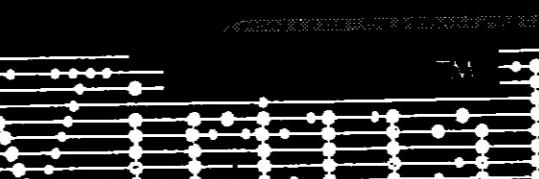
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